

ACKROYD... page 41

MARY ALLEN My vision of a brighter future for opera



SHARON STONE MEETS AN ALIEN



Board will replace Oflot director

GTech to sell lottery stake in £51m deal

By Carol Midgley and Jon Ashworth

THE National Lottery is set to undergo the most radical overhaul in its three-year history...

The Government revealed yesterday that it is scrapping the one-man post of lottery watchdog, two months after sacking Peter Davis...

Gtech's stake will be split among Camelot's other shareholders: De La Rue, Racal and Cadbury Schweppes...

Since November 1994, when tickets first went on sale, Gtech has been paid £74 million as a supplier to Camelot...



way that commands public confidence.

Richard Spring, the Tory culture spokesman, criticised the move, saying: "This is a further example of the Government undermining the independence of the lottery..."

Announcing his commission plan, Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, said having five people would reduce the risk of further conflicts of interest...

The changes will be introduced as an amendment to the National Lottery Bill, due to come before MPs for its second reading next week...

Gtech directors and Tim Holley, chief executive of Camelot, met John Stoker, the acting Oflot director-general, last week as part of Oflot's ongoing investigation into whether Gtech was a "fit and proper" company...

Mr Smith welcomed Camelot's "sensitivity to the public mood" over its ending of its link with the US company.



Lieutenant-Commander Karen Pearce, who was accused at the court martial of her former lover of splitting up marriages, leaving the hearing yesterday. Report, page 3

Man arrested near store in Mardi Gra bomber hunt

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

ANTI-TERRORIST detectives investigating the Mardi Gra bomber were last night questioning a man arrested after a suspicious package was left near a Sainsbury's store in Ruislip, west London.

Scotland Yard said the man was seized just after 6pm when he was seen acting suspiciously near the store. Police refused to say whether the store was under surveillance as a possible target by the bomber but a special team has been hunting the bomber for months...

The suspect package that was found was left close to the store which has been the target for the bomber in other attacks and a nearby London Underground station. The suspect was rushed to a police station as the area was cordoned off and people were moved from their homes.

London Underground trains on the Central Line were halted for a time. Explosives experts were called in to destroy the package with a controlled explosion and an attempt at blackmail. But police said later that the device was an empty box.

Robert Clayton, 35, who lives in Station Approach, south Ruislip, which looks onto the store in Victoria Road, said police vans and cars had arrived around 5.30pm and all roads in the area were sealed off. He said police cars and vans flooded the area.

Since the first attacks in 1994 the bomber has struck 36 times with devices aimed first at Barclays Bank and Barclaycard and then Sainsbury's shops. The home-made devices are made with shotgun cartridges, tubing and trigger mechanisms linked to timers.

Most attacks have been in west and southeast London, and a few at the homes of staff linked to the companies in Essex, Northamptonshire and Kent. During the attacks on the supermarket chain the devices were hidden inside plastic shopping bags backed with groceries and dumped near by.

Two victims have suffered minor injuries when they picked up the bags or were close when they exploded. The bomber took his name from the fact he used boxes which had been used to package demonstration tapes for a pop group called the "Mardi Gra Experience".

At one point he demanded more than £10 million from Barclays and also cash from Sainsbury's but he never followed up offers to negotiate, fearing a trap.

Profiles drawn up for the police suggest the bomber is a middle-aged man with some do-it-yourself ability. The attacks may have started because of a grudge over a failed business venture and an attempt at blackmail. But psychiatrists believe the attacks have been fuelled by the bomber's desire simply to wreak some form of revenge.

He has built his devices in a shed or workshop at home using easily obtained ingredients and few clues were left. To catch him police have formed a special team with officers from SO13, the anti-terrorist branch, and the organised crime group.

Police have checked thousands of hours of closed circuit television film from around the stores looking for clues. There have been suggestions the bomber might even be a policeman because he has escaped detection.

Papon outburst as jury retires

In an angry final appeal from the dock, Maurice Papon, 87, the alleged Nazi collaborator, demanded an acquittal and accused French prosecutors of driving his wife to her grave by persecuting him on trumped-up charges. The jury retired to consider its verdict. Page 15

Deal with unions

Tony Blair prepared the ground for a compromise in the battle over union recognition yesterday amid indications that he is facing a new confrontation over workers' rights. Page 2

Table with 2 columns: Category and Price. Includes TV & Radio, Weather, Crosswords, Letters, etc.

Buying The Times overseas... Australia \$3.50, Canada \$3.50, etc.



Kray's hopes of release dashed

By Richard Ford and Stewart Tendler

REGGIE KRAY, the gangland killer, has lost his bid to be freed from prison after serving 30 years for the murder of Jack "the Hat" McVitie.

The former East End gangster had hoped he would be released on parole or allowed to be transferred to an open prison in preparation for his eventual release.

But the Parole Board, which heard his case last month, has dashed his hopes and decided he is not suitable for parole or even for transfer to an open prison.

The decision is understood to have been given by Kray, aged 64, by prison officials yesterday. It will be a shattering blow for Kray, who had planned to settle with his new wife in East Anglia and will set back a growing campaign by friends to win his freedom.

The Parole Board reviewed Kray's case because next month he will have completed the minimum 30-year term imposed on him for "retribution and deterrence" when he was given life at the Old Bailey in 1969.

The tariff ends this year because he had been arrested in 1968.

Kray, transferred to Wayland prison in Norfolk last August, wants to live with his new wife Roberta, 38, in a country house, where he planned to run a recording studio. He married while in Maidstone prison and friends organised a laser show outside the jail before the wedding.

Members of the Parole Board studied psychiatrists' and probation officers' reports which suggested that Kray represented a minimum risk if released.

The reasons for their decision have been given to him in writing. Prison sources said in February that they were uncertain that Kray had fully addressed his offending behaviour.

Confidential reports prepared for the parole hearing indicated that Kray had changed from the confrontational inmate of 30 years ago to one who likes reading and poetry and disliked watching television.

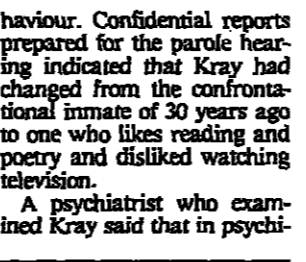
A psychiatrist who examined Kray said that in psychiatric terms he could be deemed entirely capable of independent living.

Another medical report suggested that Kray showed no serious instance of violence over the past few years though his said there were "strong intimidating eye contact [which] conveyed feelings of suppressed aggression or defensiveness with a paranoid and contemptuous flavour".

Kray and his twin brother, Ronnie, were convicted in 1969 for the murder of Jack McVitie and George Cornell. They were given mandatory life sentences.

Ronnie Kray died of a heart attack in 1995 while in Broadmoor top security hospital and received a huge traditional East End funeral.

Even if the Parole Board had recommended that Kray be released, the final decision would rest with Jack Straw, the Home Secretary.



Kray: planned a new life in East Anglia

FREE DEIRDRE... Politicians won't help - they don't live in the real world

Rise in output boosts market... Manufacturers seem to be winning the fight against the strong pound, with figures out yesterday showing that national output actually rose in March on the back of strong domestic demand.

G&S win chorus of parliamentary support

By James Landale, Political Reporter

GILBERT and Sullivan might once have joked that MPs left their brains outside the Commons but yesterday they would have been grateful for the support Parliament gave to their operas.

MPs and peers from all parties mounted a fierce defence of the cash-strapped D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, which has performed the librettist's and composer's works since 1875. They assailed the Arts Council as cultural snobs and elitists for refusing to give regular funding to the touring company, now more than £1 million in debt. Although most of its funds come from private donations and box-office takings, the company says it will be forced to close within months unless at least £600,000 in public money is made available.

In impassioned debates in both Houses of Parliament, MPs and peers attacked the Arts Council for giving £30 million to other opera companies without the D'Oyly Carte getting a "farthing".

Martin Bell, Independent MP for Totton who introduced the Commons debate, said: "We English have no Mozart, we have no Puccini, we have no Wagner, but my goodness we have a Gilbert and Sullivan who have entertained and illuminated our country and the world for more than 120 years and whose legacy is now in danger."

He added: "You have to wonder what the Arts Council has against this oldest and most distinguished of our modern opera companies. Perhaps it's too popular, perhaps it is accessible,

perhaps people like it too much. Perhaps if it wrapped up bricks in muslin or islands in plastic it would be deemed worthy of Arts Council funding. Perhaps if it cross-dressed the cast of The Gondoliers or had the crew of HMS Pinafore clad in black leather and chains, it would then be deemed capable, worthy, of Arts Council funds."

He said D'Oyly Carte was a touring company and could, therefore, not apply for the more-available Arts Council capital grants. In a joking reference to controversy surrounding Lord Irvine of Lairg's £650,000 rent of his Westminster apartments, Mr Bell noted that one of the leading characters in the opera Iolanthe was a Lord Chancellor "who - how can I put this tactfully - had a certain sense of who he was in the order of things. All that

[the opera] lacks is a wallpaper song." In the same opera, the Guardsman sings: "When in that House MPs divide. If they've a brain and cerebellum too. They have to leave that brain outside. And vote just as their leaders tell 'em to."

Sir Patrick Cormack, Tory MP for Staffordshire South, condemned the "Arts Council snobs who think poetry shouldn't rhyme and music shouldn't have tunes. If tuned turds at the Serpentine are worthy of subsidy, then Gilbert and Sullivan... deserve Arts Council help."

Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Great Grimsby, accused the Arts Council of seeing "Gilbert and Sullivan as popular, as middle-brow, as something beneath their gaze and beneath their contempt - and that is why they

INTERNATIONAL calls UP TO 66% CHEAPER than BT? THINK st... Rise in output boosts market... Manufacturers seem to be winning the fight against the strong pound...

All in all it's another brick from your wall, Prime Minister

Hereditary peers listening in to Prime Minister's Questions yesterday will have heard themselves described by Tony McNulty (Lab, Harrow E) as "historical throwbacks and hillbilly inbreds". A Prime Minister could not really cap this and Tony Blair's difficulty in following the antics of his supporters led him into trouble twice. Mr Blair grew careless and dropped two modest bricks one hilarious, the other more serious.

It was Sir Peter Tapsell (C, Horncastle) who noticed the second brick and passed it round for inspection ten minutes later during Points of Order. The remark had passed unchallenged during PM's Questions itself, when Blair was answering Gerald Kaufman (Lab, Manchester Gorton). Mr Kaufman suggested the Tories were hypocritical to accuse Alistair Campbell (Blair's chief press secretary) of bullying; Margaret Thatcher's Sir Bernard Ingham had been no better, he sneered.

Kaufman meant to be helpful but has never quite got the hang of this. Being helpful involves giving someone an encouraging little prod but Kaufman gives people a massive shove, and they trip. His question to the Prime Minister turned into a rant against the Tories of such rhetorical violence — expressions like "the sewer rather than the sewage" come ill so soon after lunch — that it was hard for Blair to cap it.

He made the mistake of trying. What really galled the Tories, the Prime Minister agreed, was that his press secretary "does an effective job attacking the Conservative Party".

The Number Ten chief press secretary is a civil servant. He is expected to be "political" in helping the Government present policy but should draw the line at helping attack the Opposition. Labour hear-heard rather nervously. Tory heads shook in disbelief.

Mr Hague did not pick this up. He seems nervous of joining the fray over the Prime Minister's relationship with Rupert Murdoch. Instead, Hague's early questions had been as exotic as the colour combination of blue shirt and orange tie he chose for the occasion: he seemed to tell the Prime Minister he should stop other countries

opting for a single European currency. His later questions were futile: he tried to make the Prime Minister agree that the Tories had spent more on health than Labour.

No doubt but who cares what the Tories once spent on health? Nobody but the sore and resentful Tory faithful among whom it is Hague's fate to socialise too much. It was left to Sir Peter Tapsell to raise Blair's job description for a press secretary with the Chair, later. This was none of Betty

Boothroyd's business, as she explained. But the *faux pas* had been registered. So has Mr Blair's second gaffe, though it is more for Rory Bremner than the constitutional lawyers. He was answering a spiky question from Dennis Skinner, who for his curtain-raiser pretended to consult a pager (with a message, perhaps, from Alistair Campbell), read out "May I congratulate ...?" — then threw it aside.

Unions angry at 'bias towards employers'

By Philip Webster, Christine Buckley and Charles Bremner

TONY BLAIR prepared the ground for a compromise in the battle over union recognition yesterday amid indications that he is facing a new confrontation over workers' rights.

Pro-union Labour MPs voiced fears that Mr Blair was leaning towards the CBI in the dispute after he told MPs that the Government had to take account of the needs of the employer "to run an effective business".

At the same time union leaders expressed renewed concern over what they fear may be an attempt by ministers to weaken new European laws preventing people being forced to work more than 48 hours a week.

Margaret Beckett met senior union leaders last night in the latest attempt to come to an agreement on plans to hold ballots of workers on union representation.

While the TUC wants the issue to be decided by a straight majority of those who take part in a ballot, the CBI wants recognition to be granted only if there is a majority of all those entitled to vote.

The Government is expected to insist that a ballot will only be valid if a certain proportion of the workforce takes part, and the current compromise figure appears to be around 60 per cent.

Mr Blair raised laughter from Conservative MPs when he said the Government was negotiating over what was

meant by the Labour manifesto to promise to allow recognition if "a majority of the relevant workforce" wanted it.

He added, however, that it was important to strike the right balance between the rights of an individual to be part of a union and represented by it and the needs of an employer.

Fears among union leaders about exemptions to the EU directive on a 48-hour week will heighten already tense relations between Labour and the unions created by the row over recognition.

Ministers have long been expected to allow arrangements which will enable people to work more than 48 hours if they wish and the unions have said this put pressure on their colleagues. Union leaders believe that workers will be too frightened of losing their jobs to say no.

Bill Morris, general secretary of the T&G union, said: "The directive is supposed to protect workers. It won't work that way if employees are expected to argue their case individually."

Iain MacLean, of the Barclays finance union UNIFI, said opt-out clauses for employees make employers put pressure on employees to sign up. "It will also undermine the credibility of trade unions if collective agreements on working hours can be broken with impunity. The British work the longest hours in Europe, when unemploy-

ment is at the root of many of our social problems."

Other union leaders are holding their peace until the Government publishes draft regulations next week for the directive which is scheduled to start on October 1.

Meanwhile the European Commission started the machinery yesterday for extending the directive to cover tens of thousands of British transport workers, hospital doctors and employees in all the other areas initially excluded from the original directive.

Padraig Flynn, the Social Affairs Commissioner, gave European employers and unions the statutory six weeks to tell Brussels whether or not they will negotiate their own agreements to extend the directive. Failing that, the Commission will impose its will with new legislation.

Since Unice, the European employers' federation, has already rejected the need for a new law, the Commission is almost certain to draft a directive on its own. This will need only a qualified majority vote from member states to pass and most of these have already indicated that they favour a new law. The employers and unions in maritime transport this week reached their own accord on applying the working time directive to their sector. All vessels in EU waters will be covered. Junior doctors will also be covered, although with a more flexible arrangement.



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH



Facing the chop: a scene from a D'Oyly Carte production of *The Mikado*

Chorus of support for G&S

Continued from page 1
won't support it".

Patricia Hewitt, Labour MP for Leicester West, said: "Snobbery towards popular art forms and popular opera should play no part whatever in a modern arts policy for this country."

Tom Clarke, the Arts Minister, said the Government was fully aware of the support that the D'Oyly Carte had in Parliament and he would make sure the Arts Council

was aware of it. But he insisted it was for the council, and not the Government, to allocate extra funding for companies.

In the Lords, Lord Denham, a former Tory Chief Whip, led support for the company.

Gilbert and Sullivan began writing together in 1871 but their careers did not take off until they were discovered by Richard D'Oyly Carte, the impresario and manager of the Royalty Theatre. He

formed the company in 1878 as a vehicle for their light operettas. The best known include *Trial by Jury*, *The Mikado*, *HMS Pinafore*, *Iolanthe*, *Utopia Ltd*, *Princess Ida*, *Patience*, *The Sorcerer* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Despite their success, Gilbert and Sullivan fell out and stopped collaborating in the 1890s. After Richard D'Oyly Carte's death in 1901, his family kept the company going.

Unionist demand threatens talks

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

THE final dash for peace in Northern Ireland hit another obstacle yesterday when the Ulster Unionist Party said that it was halting negotiations until the Irish Government agreed to abandon the territorial claim to the North contained in its constitution.

Speaking a few hours before Tony Blair's Downing Street summit with Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister, last night, John Taylor, the UUP's deputy leader, accused Dublin of "dragging its feet" on a matter of fundamental importance to Unionists and said there could be no real negotiations on other issues until it was resolved.

At Westminster, the Prime Minister publicly chided another UUP MP, Willie Thompson, for his negativity in the face of a "historic opportunity". He told the West Tyrone MP: "What I urge you, and people like you, to do is to try to help constructively in getting a deal and a negotiated settlement ... Please, rather than shake your head, help us get to where the vast majority of people in Northern Ireland want to be."

Mr Taylor's announcement infuriated Dublin, which has produced two dozen draft

constitutional amendments in an attempt to remove the claim while preserving an aspiration to Irish unity by consent. With eight days until the deadline for agreement, Liz O'Donnell, Ireland's deputy foreign minister, called the UUP move "particularly unhelpful" and accused Unionists of demanding much but giving little.

Seamus Mallon, deputy leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, likewise insisted that an agreement would be hard to reach unless more nationalist demands were met.

With the spirit of compromise still notably absent from Stormont, the best hope of success lies in George Mitchell, the talks chairman, producing a draft settlement before the weekend that both nationalists and Unionists can accept, however reluctantly.

The Loyalist Volunteer Force threatened action against Irish civil servants involved in the talks at Stormont, and the Anglo-Irish secretariat at Maryfield in East Belfast. The terrorist group has been blamed for several recent small bomb attacks against Roman Catholics.

Soames loses plot after hearty lunch

By Nicholas Watt, Political Correspondent

THE tradition of the long lunch is still alive among some of the old guard on the Tory benches. Nicholas Soames, the former Foods Minister, took a leaf out of the Alan Clark diaries yesterday when he strode into the Commons chamber after a hearty lunch and made a speech that could tactfully be described as meandering.

As MPs settled down for a series of speeches on the Money Resolution in the Regional Development Agencies Bill, their spirits were lifted by the sight of the round Mr Soames rising unsteadily.

"Madam Speaker, on a morning not long ago, a cold damp spring morning, after the House had been sitting all night and you, Madam Speaker, regrettably were not in the chair at the time ... the scene that passed before our eyes was the scene of older days when you yourself were on the backbenches," the MP for Mid-Sussex began.

As MPs giggled, Betty Boothroyd politely intervened to bring Mr Soames back to the Money Resolution. "He is romanticising and taking me along with him," she said.

Mr Soames reassured her



Soames bemoaned the absence of Primarolo

he was keen to turn to the superannuation costs in the Money Resolution. Alas, his thoughts went astray as he lamented the absence of Dawn Primarolo, Financial Secretary to the Treasury. "It is a matter of regret that the Honourable Lady, who ... commands the universal admiration for whatever reason of Hon Gentlemen on this side of the House, is not in here in her place."

Miss Boothroyd told him to return to the Money Resolution. He made his point, but soon turned in affectionate tones to Madam Speaker, who ended the debate as he collapsed in laughter.

Richard Caborn, the Environment Minister, told him: "After what seems to have been a good lunch, you got extremely emotional."

Blair defends his newspaper links

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

TONY BLAIR declared yesterday that all newspaper proprietors were ruthless, able and dedicated to their business, just as he was to his.

Under Tory attack in the Commons over his allegedly close links with Rupert Murdoch, the chairman and chief executive of the News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, the Prime Minister said that he knew all the newspaper proprietors and had no illusions about them. Pressed again over his telephone conversation with the Italian Prime Minister in which he mentioned Mr Murdoch's bid for a television network, Mr Blair denied that he treated Mr Murdoch any differently from anyone else.

At Prime Minister's Question Time, Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, asked Mr Blair whether he understood concern about the "seemingly unstoppable media power and political influence of Rupert Murdoch". Mr Blair replied: "Of course I understand the concerns. But the only issue is whether BSkyB was treated differently from any other media company or significant British company. The answer is no."

Meeting proprietors was a

"sensible part of being a leader of a political party," he said.

The Conservatives later protested over Mr Blair's statement, when defending his press secretary, Alistair Campbell, that they only criticised him because he was so effective in attacking them. They asked the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Richard Wilson, for an inquiry into Mr Blair's "admission" that his press secretary had this political role. He claimed that Mr Campbell's job was a civil service position and that he should not be involved in political activities.

Downing Street said that Mr Campbell could engage in political work because he was employed as a special adviser.

Last night, in a speech in London, Chris Patten, the former Tory party chairman and last Governor of Hong Kong, accused Labour of allowing Mr Murdoch to dictate its policy on Europe.

Merchant banking sources close to negotiations between Mr Murdoch and Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian media tycoon and former Prime Minister, yesterday categorically denied a report that Mr Murdoch had ended previous talks by sending an abusive message through an intermediary.

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Some of my best friends are married men

Stephen Farrell at the adultery court martial

THE woman at the centre of a Ministry of Defence adultery scandal told a court martial of her friendships with a series of men yesterday and said: "I see no reason to be unfriendly towards a man just because he's married."

Lieutenant-Commander Karen Pearce, 34, said that she was close to up to six men, four of them married, during her affair with her former boss Lieutenant-Colonel Keith Pople, and that two had slept at her house. However, she insisted that she had been faithful to Pople except for one instance with a junior colleague from HMS *Illustrious* in a hire car in Malta. Pople, aged 42, was removed from his job as Commanding Officer 4 Regiment Army Air Corps after the investigation began. He is accused of having had an affair with Lieutenant-Commander Pearce, one of the Navy's highest-ranking Wrens, while he was her superior officer in the Whitehall office of the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff.

He is also accused of bombarding her with threatening phone calls after they broke up and sending letters containing intimate details about her to her friends, new lover and new commanding officer. He denies conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline, and scandalous conduct. The court martial at Aldershot was told that Lieutenant-Commander Pearce was accused of splitting up marriages and being serially unfaithful. Ryddion Willis, counsel for Pople, said that he left her after finding a cache of love letters from other men in a drawer under her bed in Nyewood, West Sussex.

Lieutenant-Commander Pearce, a Russian interpreter who once worked at GCHQ Cheltenham, was questioned about friendships with six men including an American assistant air attaché, Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Moore, whom she took to dinner and nightclubs, and a Major Wilson of the Royal Marines, "platonic". She said she had been committed to Pople and that her one infidelity was with Lieutenant Nigel McTear, also married, who later left his wife and now lives with her.

Although she admitted telling Pople she had slept with McTear in her cabin on HMS *Illustrious*, and confirmed that it would have been possible, she insisted the one-off liaison occurred on shore. She also denied putting pressure on Pople to leave his wife Brenda, who sat behind him in court while he listened to the evidence. Wearing white gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints, Lieutenant-Commander Pearce read out a series of poems, letters and cards allegedly sent by Pople. Among them was an anonymous letter received by Lieutenant McTear in early 1997, in which Pople allegedly boasted he had slept with her while McTear was aboard HMS *Illustrious*.

You will need powers of forgiveness. You love her. For the time being, she needs you

whom she first met on a Russian ship visit and later aboard HMS *Illustrious*. Lieutenant-Commander Pearce confirmed that both men had slept at her house more than once, and she accepted there had been wardrobe speculation about her relationship with Major Wilson, but said both were quite open about being married and her friendship with them was

never thing you know what she is doing when she is not there. In another typed letter to the Wren's schoolfriend Caroline Cain in January 1997, he allegedly complains again of her infidelity to him with McTear: "To have broken up three marriages in two years and to have persuaded two men to leave their families for her is quite a feat." To another he allegedly wrote: "She is so lovely but she is also the most duplicitous person I have ever known and I am afraid she lies to everyone."

Without any trace of emotion, Lieutenant-Commander Pearce then read out poems sent in happier days, with letters including pet names. The poems included the lines: "Tis true 'tis day, what though it be, Why should we rise because it's light, Did we lie down because 'twas night?" The hearing continues.

and look carefully. You need to recognise the signs of her lying. They are very subtle. I would wish you luck but you don't deserve it. You will however need powers of forgiveness you never thought existed. May you find them. You love her. For the time being she needs you. But never believe you are anything other than an option. Never believe you even know what all the options might be and

never thing you know what she is doing when she is not there. In another typed letter to the Wren's schoolfriend Caroline Cain in January 1997, he allegedly complains again of her infidelity to him with McTear: "To have broken up three marriages in two years and to have persuaded two men to leave their families for her is quite a feat." To another he allegedly wrote: "She is so lovely but she is also the most duplicitous person I have ever known and I am afraid she lies to everyone."

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Golfers warned that Fore! is not fair play

By Claudia Joseph

UNTIL now the cry of "Fore!" followed by a sheepish wave to a distant fairway has always been thought sufficient to warn other golfers of an approaching slice or hook.

But yesterday three High Court judges ruled that the warning, used for more than 100 years, may not be enough to absolve players of their liabilities. Anthony Lightning, a left-hander with a slice, was ordered to pay compensation to another player, John Pearson, after hitting him in the eye.

Mr Lightning, 45, of Mopley, Southampton, argued at the Court of Appeal that he was not liable because he had shouted "Fore". But the judges disagreed after hearing how Mr Pearson, 46, had suffered permanent damage to his retina.

Yesterday Lord Justice Simon Brown, sitting with Lord Justice Otton and Sir Christopher Slade, ordered the case back to Southampton County Court for damages to be assessed. Afterwards Mr Pearson, of Lordshill, Southampton, said he was "very pleased" with the result.

Mr Lightning was playing in the rough at the tenth hole of Dunwood Manor Golf Club in Romsey, Hampshire, in October 1992. His shot deflected off a tree and hit Mr Pearson, 80 yards away on the fairway.



Lieutenant-Colonel Keith Pople with wife Brenda: he is accused of sending letters to her friends and new lover

Man steals art worth £1.2m from flat he rented

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

ARTWORKS and heirlooms worth more than £500,000 have been taken from a family's London home by a well-heeled young thief who rented their flat and ransacked it.

Yesterday, Scotland Yard started circulating a list of more than 50 stolen items throughout the art world. Police believe the thief was planning to clear out the flat completely but disappeared as a cleaner arrived.

Police said the victims are still recovering from the shock of losing paintings, furniture and objets d'art held for generations. The losses include seven paintings, an antique table, silver mounted boar tusks, elephant tusks and a Russian medal presented by the last Tsar.

and wanted somewhere to stay for a week. The thief met the agent in the street to see the flat which was the first property on the agent's list. Mr Thorn was in his twenties, well-groomed and well-dressed, and carried a mobile telephone. After seeing the flat, he announced that he would take it for a week. He paid £1,500 for the letting, plus a deposit of £1,500, and gave financial references. Because the letting was for such a short period the agent did not ask for any other references.

The thief was in the flat for nearly a week. The day before he was expected to leave, the cleaner rang to say she that wanted to do some work the next day, but the young man asked her not to call. She ignored him and let herself in to the third floor flat to find various packages left ready for collection, loud music playing and the curtains closed and the doors to the bedroom shut.

Realising something was wrong, she called the police. Yesterday, Detective Inspector Peter Johnstone said that he had never come across such a thing. "It was audacious and pretty cheeky. We are looking for someone who has the nerve to present themselves as a bona-fide tenant backed up by cash."

Earprint evidence fails to make mark

EARPRINT evidence used for the first time in a trial in Britain was rejected by a jury yesterday. It had been claimed that two earprints left by a burglar on the front and back windows of an elderly, disabled woman's home and at an 86-year-old man's house belonged to Mark Smith.

Two earprint experts told Liverpool Crown Court that they were sure the prints belonged to Mr Smith. But after three hours' deliberation the jury cleared him of the aggravated burglary and burglary.

Mr Smith, 29, of Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, beamed broadly as he was discharged from the dock. His barrister, Mr Nicholas Clarke, in his closing speech had compared the inspectors' method of investigation as "Blue Peter art" involving jigsaw puzzles, "felt-tip pen and sticky-back plastic". He described the findings as "not science fact but pseudo-science fiction". Mark Brown, for the prosecution, had suggested "everyone has a unique set of ear prints in the same way we have individual fingerprints or DNA profiles".

FILM PRODUCER

IS NOW IN WITH HIS OFFICE ASSISTANT.

Ex-wife of Kenny Everett sues over 'bad taste article'

THE former wife of the late Kenny Everett was "horrified and appalled" when *Woman's Own* broke its promise not to publish an article about her life with the outrageous broadcaster without her approval.

Lee Everett-Alkin told Mr Justice Bennett in the High Court in London yesterday that after his death from Aids in April 1995 she agreed to be interviewed by the magazine — which she had been brought up to believe was "knitting patterns and niceness" — having been assured that she would have the right of veto over any proposed article.

She rejected a draft sent to her because it concentrated on the negative aspects of her life with the broadcaster and made it sound as though she came to hate him. She was "very, very upset" when *Woman's Own* went ahead and published. "I thought they were honourable," she said. Mrs Everett-Alkin is suing



Everett stayed close friends with ex-wife

JPC Magazines for breach of contract and of confidence. She is claiming £30,000 for the negative aspects of her life with the broadcaster and made it sound as though she came to hate him. She was "very, very upset" when *Woman's Own* went ahead and published. "I thought they were honourable," she said. Mrs Everett-Alkin is suing

described as "excellent and well-balanced". They also say that details of her life with Mr Everett were already in the public domain through her 1987 autobiography, *Kinds of Loving*.

Mrs Everett-Alkin was the partner of the Sixties pop star Billy Fury before meeting Kenny Everett and marrying him in 1969. They divorced in 1985, but remained close.

She claims the *Woman's Own* article laid emphasis on Kenny Everett's homosexuality, his offensive conduct towards her and Mr Alkin, and her allegedly hostile reaction.

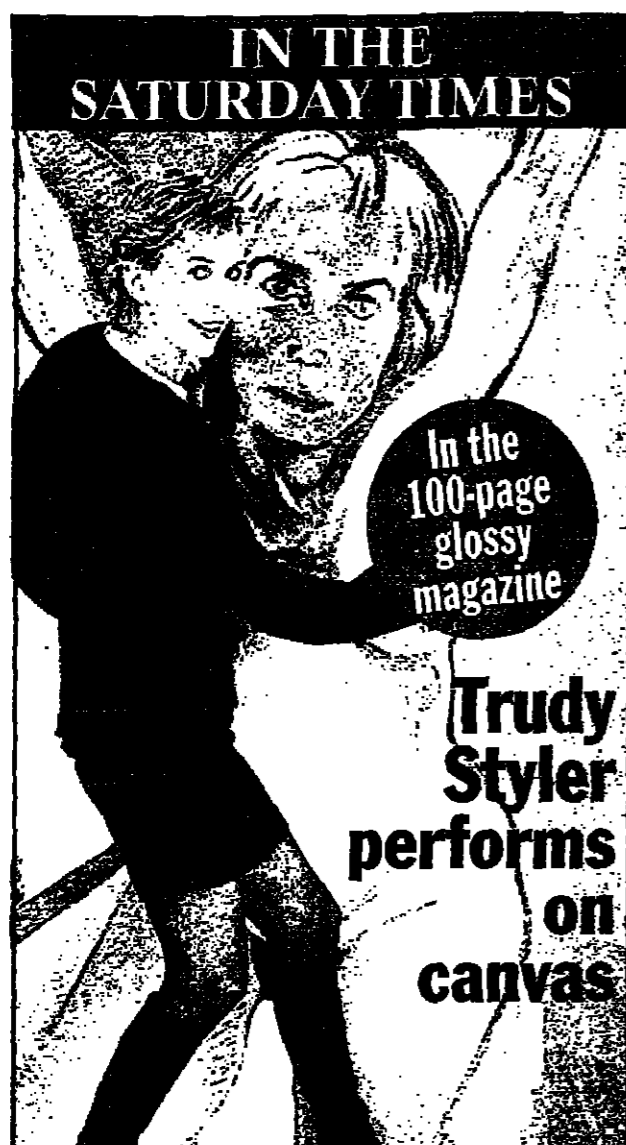
The front-page headline, "Exclusive: Kenny's wild gay parties drove me away, by Lee Everett", and highlighted phrases such as "He was just an old drama queen really" depicted her as being anti-gay generally and willing to make money attacking him as soon as he was dead.

The publishers say that through her husband John Alkin, she gave her consent for the article, which he had de-

The hearing continues.

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IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

In the 100-page glossy magazine

Trudy Styler performs on canvas

Prison officers go sick in protest at assault claims

BY RICHARD FORD AND HELEN RUMBELOW

MORE than half the prison officers at Wormwood Scrubs went "sick" yesterday, causing serious disruption to the country's biggest jail.

The protest by members of the Prison Officers' Association follows the suspension of eight officers and a manager at the jail over allegations that inmates were assaulted and abused by staff. Seventy staff from other jails in London and the South East were drafted into the West London prison as the scale of the protest emerged.

Richard Tilt, the Director-General of the Prison Service, said that the large numbers going sick had to be seen as protest action. He added: "Staff must return to work. We have a duty to see to the security of the prisoners and the safety of people working there. We recognise that the current investigation has unsettled many staff, but the way

forward is to have the allegations properly and externally investigated."

The mass sickness began affecting prison officers within hours of the announcement that the Metropolitan Police was to hold a criminal investigation into the allegations.

Twelve of 21 officers did not turn up for the night shift on Tuesday, and more than 100 failed to turn up for shifts yesterday. Some did not return after meal breaks. Prison officers, who are banned from taking industrial action, do not have to produce a sick note for an absence of less than seven days.

Their action meant that prisoners were unlocked late, and meals and visits were delayed. Remand prisoners were 90 minutes late for court and inmates had to spend most of the morning in their cells.

Last night the POA said that

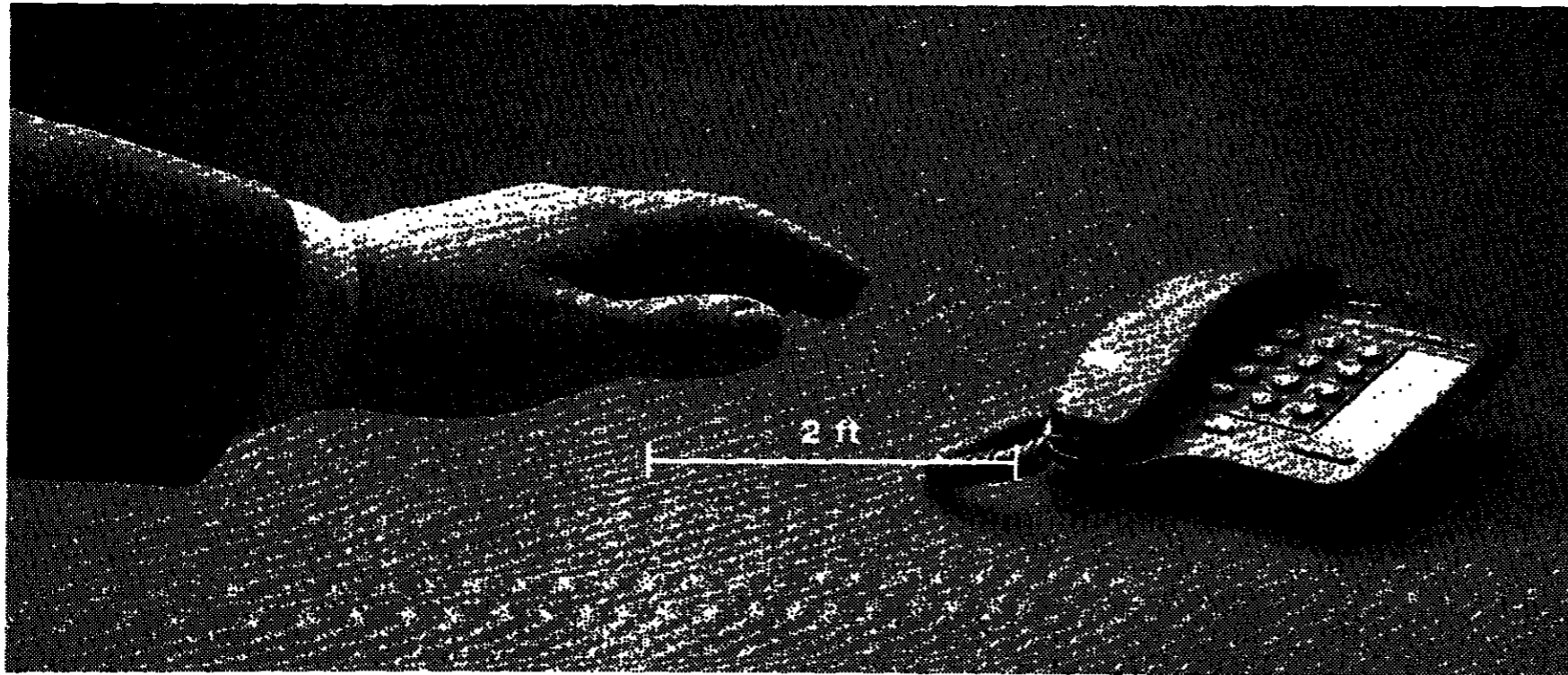
it had reached agreement with the prison management, and hoped some of its members would be able to return to work in the next few days. A spokesman said that the deal involved greater supervision in particularly sensitive areas of the prison, so that members felt protected from malicious allegations. Ron Adams, vice-president of the POA, claimed that members had been under severe stress at the jail. "We saw our members breaking down in tears. There is a genuine level of illness."

The nine suspended staff members at the jail will remain on full pay pending the outcome of the police investigation. The allegations date back as far as October 1996 and include accusations of racism, beatings and intimidation of prisoners, one of whom claims he was assaulted by staff almost every day for a month.



Rebecca Hossack, one of the judges of the Prison Butterfly Competition, with some of the entries yesterday. Inmates can win £250 for the best picture of a butterfly

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Racists drove past laughing as boy died

Lin Jenkins on evidence of link between Stephen Lawrence murder and the killing of a schoolboy

THE Stephen Lawrence inquiry was told yesterday of a link between his murder and the death of a schoolboy in another racist attack two years earlier.

Three known local racists, two convicted for their part of the murder of Rolan Adams in February 1991, drove back and forth past the murder scene laughing as they did so, but were not stopped by police.

Sergeant Andrew Hodges was standing near where Stephen lay dying from two stab wounds in April 1993, when he spotted a red Astra car with five white males inside.

"It came to my attention because when I first saw them they were laughing," he told the inquiry. He asked for a call to be put out on the radio for the car to be stopped. After going to a local pub to make inquiries he saw the car again, travelling in the opposite direction past the scene in Eltham, southeast London.

Asked by Michael Mansfield, QC, for Stephen's parents, why he had not jumped out in front of it, he said he did not have time. "Had this been a police officer murdered you would not allow a car with possible suspects to drive up and down past the scene twice," Mr Mansfield said.

The following week Sergeant Nigel Clement recognised the vehicle and took the name of the driver and passenger, respectively Daniel Copley and Kieran Highland, and passed the information to the inquiry team. Until he was

told at the inquiry yesterday who they were he said he had no idea of their backgrounds.

The inquiry was told that Mr Copley was part of a 25-strong group involved in the attack that resulted in the murder of 15-year-old Rolan Adams. Mr Highland was a leading light in Nazi Turnout, a racist group operating in the Eltham area. A third man identified as having been in the car as it drove past the scene was Jason Groatley, who was also convicted for his part in the attack.

Mark Thornburrow, then 19, is serving life for murdering Rolan by stabbing him in the throat as he and his brother were making their way home from a youth club on the Thamesmead estate, southeast London.

Inspector Steven Groves, the officer in charge on the night of Stephen's murder, was asked by Edmund Lawson, QC to the inquiry, about the suggestion that first aid was denied Stephen because "you and other police officers did not wish to dirty your hands with a black man's blood". He replied: "I find this very disappointing. First aid was administered and administered properly."

Mr Mansfield suggested that because he saw a black man on the pavement he had assumed it was a fight, even though he had been told it was an assault.

Inspector Groves protested that he was not a racist, but admitted he did not consider he could be dealing with a racist attack until he had been at the scene for some time. The inquiry continues.



Mansfield: suggested lack of prompt action

Cameras to scan for stolen cars

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

PLANS for a police "super computer" capable of screening millions of vehicles on motorways for stolen cars and matching them with possible suspects were announced yesterday.

Within five years cameras on main road networks, key junctions, tunnels and all ports and airports will be linked to an enlarged police national computer at Hendon in North London.

As vehicles pass the cameras their registration numbers will be automatically read against the 45 million national registration records and a file of 200,000 stolen or suspect vehicles.

The system will sift the

files in seconds and alert police traffic controls to intercept or follow the vehicle. The system has already been tested in the City of London's "ring of steel" against IRA attacks and at Dover and Stranraer ports.

The first steps towards nationwide use of the system will become possible later this year when the capacity of the national computer is doubled. The Police Information Technology Organisation, which runs the computer, has just signed a multi-million pound contract for new equipment.

The vehicle check has already been used by forces and produced an arrest in one big case.

THURSDAY APRIL 2 1998

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Allen tells of shock at fall from Garden

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

MARY ALLEN spoke yesterday of her consternation at being replaced as chief executive of the Royal Opera House.

Breaking her silence to speak to *The Times*, Miss Allen, who left her post last week, described how, after she had given a presentation to the board — her vision of the company's future — the chairman, Sir Colin Southgate, emerged to thank her, shake her hand, and briefly bid her farewell.

It was over with brutal swiftness. She can barely remember what he said, beyond that there were no raised voices and no rows. "It was quiet and courteous."

She had sensed that the chairman had been swayed by arguments for an artistic head rather than an arts manager, but was unprepared for the shock. Composing herself with a Scotch to stave off tears and trembling, she cleared her desk.

Her seven months at Covent Garden had been troubled, but she felt she would survive because she had done nothing improper. Yesterday, she expressed disappointment rather than anger that she had not been given the chance to prove herself and that some of the players in the saga had apparently "misremembered" crucial conversations to save themselves.

Commenting on the Commons Culture Select Committee's accusation that she had not informed Earl Gowrie, while she was working for

him at the Arts Council, that Lord Chadlington was wooing her over to the Royal Opera House — one of its clients — she said she had been "shocked" by the accounts given by the Lords Gowrie and Chadlington of her departure. They had distorted the sequence of events and conversations, Ms Allen claimed.

Lord Gowrie, she said, had known all along that she had been approached. "He said, 'It is the right thing for the Royal Opera House, the right thing for you and it's been handled

made it sound as though I'd been very Machiavellian, ordering people around, making sure some people were talked to, and others not."

She bears no ill-feelings towards the three who abandoned her: "I don't blame people for defending their own position. That's life." Lord Gowrie, she said, "defended himself in the only way he could. He was going through a terrible time, poor man. I had left and he tied himself up in knots."

What had shocked her the most, she said, was that "Kaufman didn't believe me". Why, she asked, when the committee published its report had they refused to include documents that supported her claims? "They were pretty aggressive towards me. When I reread the transcript

‘There was unnecessary personal criticism in terms that were totally inappropriate’

of what I said, I felt it was fine. I hadn't remotely expected that he wouldn't believe me. There was unnecessary personal criticism in terms that were totally inappropriate."

She also expressed regret at reports that clashes with Nicholas Payne had precipitated his departure for English National Opera from his post as Royal Opera director. She dismissed such stories as "completely she had tried to persuade him to stay. 'Nicholas and I saw eye-to-eye on artistic matters. We did not on financial matters. I give priority to living within one's means. He said he kept within his budgets but we were



Mary Allen at her home near Ipswich. She spoke yesterday of a departure so brutally swift that she could not remember the fine details

having to make cuts the whole time." They had also had different ways of working.

Trying to understand why her appointment had whipped up such a furor, she suggests an underlying reason. "The Arts Council had been upset that Lord Chadlington — himself a former Arts Council

member — had not only talked to Mr Smith without consulting them but that he had recently advocated the abolition of the Arts Council. "That angered members of the Arts Council, greatly. The agenda was bigger than me."

Bernard Haitink, music director of the Royal Opera,

had been among those who had urged her to stay on: "He sent me a fax saying 'keep in there, don't go.'" So had the board members Michael Berkeley and Vivien Duffield.

She spoke of her regret that she would not be representing the company today to Sir Richard Eyre's inquiry into opera

and ballet in London. She sets out in an open letter to him — published in *The Times* today — her argument that the various companies should retain separate identities. She believes the ENO should return from the Coliseum to the rebuilt Sadler's Wells; that the Royal Ballet should move

from Covent Garden to the Coliseum; and that the Royal Opera should remain at the Garden.

Of one thing, she is sure, she said yesterday: "I know I cot have sorted the place out."

Mary Allen's view, page Letters, page

'Piece of old lumber' hits a record note

By JOHN VINCENT

A STRADIVARIUS violin once dismissed as "a piece of lumber" became the world's most valuable musical instrument yesterday when it fetched a record £947,500 at Christie's in London.

The Kreutzer Stradivarius, dated 1727, was bought by Haim Lazarov, a London-based dealer and former violinist, on behalf of one of the world's greatest violinists. He would not reveal who the violinist was but said: "We will be hearing the violin played all over the world very soon."

The price eclipsed its upper estimate of £850,000. The

previous record was held by the Mendelssohn Stradivarius, which fetched £902,000 in November 1990.

"The Kreutzer Stradivarius was last purchased in New York in 1958 by George Kress, an American amateur musician, for \$24,000. A friend commented at the time: 'Are you crazy? I don't know what you are thinking of, paying that much for a piece of lumber.'" Mr Kress died last December.

It is believed that the violin was originally owned by the French violinist Rudolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), the dedicatee of Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata.



The Stradivarius sold yesterday for £947,500

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Bankrupted City financier admits concealing wealth

By TIM JONES

ONE of the most flamboyant figures of the 1980s was yesterday that he faced a possible prison sentence for failing to disclose assets after declaring bankrupt.

Terry Ramsden, 46, pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey to five charges of concealing valuable assets from the Official Receiver or trustees in bankruptcy. They concerned involvement in a personal trust fund, property worth 7,000 and three million acres in Silversword Corporation. Ten charges which he denied were left on the file.

Once said to be the nation's richest man, Ramsden, son of a postman, owned racehorses and was described as the biggest gambler in the history of British racing. After leading an extravagant lifestyle, with homes in London, Essex, Scotland, Bermuda and Portugal, he was made bankrupt, owing £10 million. Five years ago

he was given a two-year suspended sentence at the Old Bailey for fraudulently inducing investment in his insolvent company.

Yesterday, Ramsden, with shoulder-length hair and wearing a black polo-neck jersey, was granted bail until May 5 while other investigations were carried out. Judge Peter Beaumont told him that all sentencing options remained open.

The vehicle for Ramsden's career was an Edinburgh company called Giken International which he bought in 1984, when it had a turnover of £18,000. By 1987 the figure had risen to £3.5 billion. But within a year, Giken crashed, owing £98 million.

The venture was based on Ramsden's knowledge of the specialised and volatile market of Japanese warranis. These were options to buy shares in Japanese companies over fixed periods at particu-

lar prices. But in 1986 the market changed. Ramsden was running out of cash to keep the huge and complex portfolio of securities afloat and personal problems were crowding in.

Over the years he lost an estimated £58 million at the race track, including £2 million said to have been lost in a single day. He drove Ferraris and Rolls-Royces, owned a Gulfstream executive jet and indulged his love of football by buying Walsall Football Club, to which he would fly in his helicopter. He shared his home in southeast London, with its two swimming pools, with his wife, Lisa, and son, Jake.

After the fall of his company, Ramsden went to America, where he spent six months in prison unsuccessfully fighting extradition. At his original trial, Ramsden, of Fulham, southwest London, was described as a "broken man".



WPC Tracy Dyson, a former paramedic, was first on the scene of the stabbing

Knifed man was saved by WPC's paramedic skills

By PAUL WILKINSON

A MAN described as "the only murder victim to live to tell the tale" was saved because the first police officer on the scene had spent five years as a paramedic, a court was told yesterday.

WPC Tracy Dyson, 31, had been an officer for only three months when she was called to deal with a knife attack in Wombwell, South Yorkshire, last September. She found Donald Eyre, 56, lying on the pavement with his neck, throat and face slashed. The wounds were so deep that his windpipe was exposed.

The trial at Sheffield Crown Court of Jason Sweeney, the man accused of the attack, was halted when a woman juror had to be sent home after seeing photographs of the injuries. A new jury member was sworn in.

WPC Dyson told the court she made a rapid assessment of Mr Eyre's injuries, and then stemmed the blood flow by applying pressure to the wounds with her hands.

Too much pressure could have starved his brain of oxygen and she had to monitor the supply by checking the dilation of his pupils and his heart beat.

Detective Constable Shaun Hill told the court: "This man had been brutally attacked and would have died without doubt if Tracy had not been there."

Ian Hillis, for the prosecution, said Sweeney, who was Mr Eyre's neighbour, had attacked him after a drunken

row over Sweeney's girlfriend. The jury found Sweeney, 27, not guilty of attempted murder but guilty of wounding with intent. He was jailed for six years.

DC Hill said outside the court: "In my book, he is the only murder victim ever to live and tell the tale, it was that close. The fact that he lived is down to Tracy Dyson."

WPC Dyson, who lives with her parents in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, said: "My paramedic training proved vital in saving Mr Eyre's life but I must admit, I was hardly prepared for what I found. I knew it was a knife injury but I thought it would be superficial. But as soon as I set eyes on him, I knew exactly what to do."

"The ambulance crew had not arrived and I seemed to revert to what I used to do without blinking an eyelid. It was just instinct."



Eyre: throat and face were slashed in attack

Drinker tried to drive bus home

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A MAN who had never driven before decided to end an evening's drinking by taking a bus home. But George Morris, 52, was arrested at the wheel after careering through the centre of Basingstoke and crashing into a lamppost.

Morris, an epileptic, had drunk more than twice the legal limit when he took the single decker from a station, hitting a wall on his way out. A fitter raised the alarm after hearing a bang and seeing the bus rocking from side to side. It was later seen swerving through the streets at 25mph and mounting kerbs.

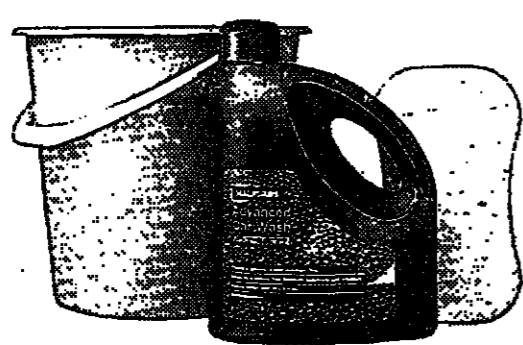
Yesterday Morris, of Basingstoke, Hampshire, was jailed for six weeks and banned from driving for 18 months by the town's magis-

trates. He admitted taking the bus without consent, drink-driving and driving without a licence or insurance. The court was told that he had been drinking heavily because he was upset over the death of his mother-in-law the day before.

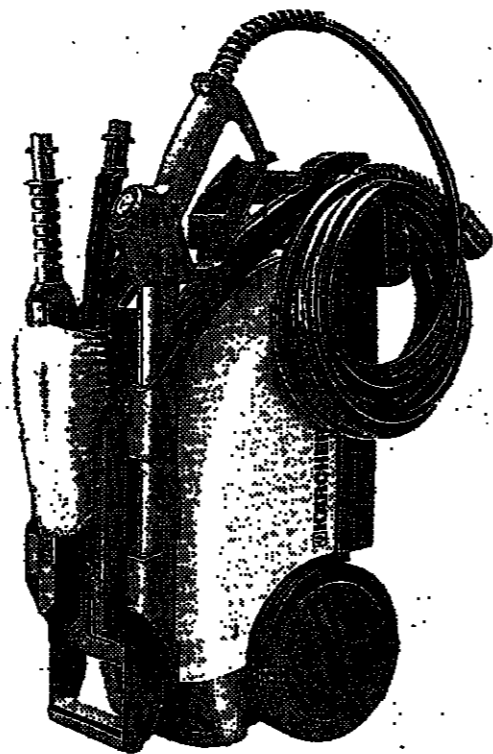
Tim Pattison, for Morris, told the court that his client remembered the bus setting off after he punched a few buttons in the cab. "I find it incredible that he was able to enter a bus, set up the steering wheel, and drive it off."

Later the Campaign Against Drink-Driving criticised the sentence as too lenient. John Knight, spokesman for the campaign, said: "He must have put dozens of lives at risk. He has virtually got away with it scot-free."

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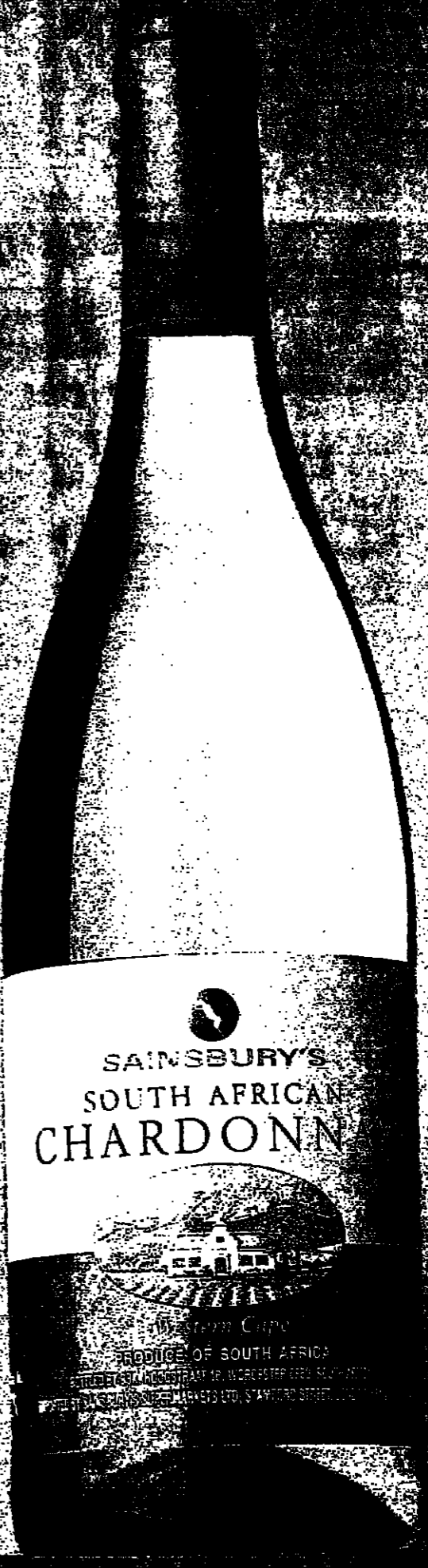
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Josie Russell to appeal over award for losing mother

Richard Ford on decision to fight £18,000 offer

JOSIE RUSSELL, whose mother and younger sister were killed in a hammer attack, is to appeal against a compensation award of £18,500 for the loss of a parent. Her father, Shaun, is also to challenge a sum of £4,000 he has been given by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority for post-traumatic stress.

Josie survived with head injuries when her mother Lin, 45, and sister Megan, 6, were killed while walking along a country path near their home in Chilenden, Kent, in July 1996. A man is to be tried for the murders later this year.

As MPs expressed anger at the size of the compensation yesterday, crime victims' groups pointed out that the cash levels were set at fixed levels by the Conservative Government, in order to cut costs. The £18,500 award for loss of parental services is based on a fixed tariff of £2,000 a year from the time of her mother's death until she reaches the age of 18.

She has also been awarded £5,000, a fixed tariff, for the death of her mother but the Compensation Authority has provoked anger by rejecting a claim for other expenses linked specifically to the loss of her mother. It has still to make

awards for claims made by Josie for her injuries, nursing and care costs and the loss of potential earnings. The maximum she will be able to receive is £500,000.

Sara Harman, family solicitor, said they had asked the authority to be "generous" in making a discretionary award for the deaths of Mrs Russell and Megan. The family would be appealing after all the claims had been answered. Miss Harman said: "So far the authority have given paltry sums. It is a graphic illustration of the inadequacy of the scheme. The authority had the possibility of exercising their discretion generously and compensating Josie for the



Josie: she survived with head injuries

terrible loss of her mother and her younger sister. This is a child with very special needs who has lost her mother in dreadful circumstances."

Miss Harman said she would seek a meeting with the Home Secretary, but Jack Straw made clear that he had no power to intervene. He said: "This is a statutory independent body and I have no day-to-day control over its operation and, particularly, not over its awards."

The fixed-rate tariff system was set up in 1995, aimed at saving up to £70 million by 2000. Helen Pease of Victim Support said: "It is the system that is wrong. The tariff is simply too low to reflect the serious nature of an attack like this upon Josie's mother."

Gwyn Prosser, Labour MP for Dover, whose constituency includes Chilenden, said: "Even if the award was being made as a compensation to an adult it would be totally inadequate, but this girl has the rest of her life to get through."

A spokesman for the compensation authority said it could not comment on individual cases.

Josie has started a new life in Snowdonia, north Wales, with her father Shaun, a university lecturer. She is currently on holiday in Kenya.

Unveiled: cockroach trap to beat the world

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE first 200 innovations chosen to represent British flair to the world will be revealed by Tony Blair tonight. The products and services, which must have been launched since January 1995 and created in Britain, were chosen by a panel of 50 designers, industrialists, scientists and academics.

The items designated "Millennium products" were among those submitted by more than 1,000 companies in response to the Prime Minister's call last year to show that Britain was leading the "creative revolution". A total of 2,000 will be chosen over the next two years.

The first selection ranges from the latest models of the production lines of giant corporations to the creations of backroom inventors. Among the more intriguing items is the Eco Biotic Cockroach Trap, created by scientists at Southampton University. They tested it in a London flat, where it terminated 50,000 roaches.

The creatures are lured onto the bridge of the wooden box by a bait. When their feet alight on the electrostatic talcum powder with which it is dusted, they slip onto a flypaper and meet their end.

The absence of pesticides is cited as an advantage over more traditional forms of extermination and a \$1 mil-



Philip Howse demonstrating his cockroach trap, using talcum powder

lion deal has been clinched with an American manufacturer.

The 200 products will be able to sport the Millennium Products marque and will be displayed at international trade fairs and promoted by the Design Council. Some will be exhibited in the

Dome.

Among them are Ford's Ka motor car and the Lotus Elise. James Dyson's bagless vacuum cleaner, the new London taxis and Eurostar trains. Lame cows are to benefit from Cowslips, a form of orthopaedic shoe. Another company is produc-

ing gloves for Nasa from a textile that conducts electricity.

Some products will not appear in the Dome. They include the British-designed Lantau Link, a six-lane covered railway bridge joining Hong Kong Island to the new airport.

Experts who will rebrand Britain

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, has named the 33 experts whose task it is to transform Britain's image around the world.

The "Panel 2000", which is chaired by Derek Fatchett, the Foreign Office Minister, has been drawn from the public and private sectors.

Key figures include Sir Colin Marshall, the chairman of British Airways and Incheape, deputy chairman of British Telecom and president of the Confederation of British Industry.

Stella McCartney, 26, the chief designer of the French fashion house Chloe, the Channel 4 presenter Zeinab Badawi and the Minister without Portfolio, Peter Mandelson, will join the athlete Judy Simpson and the MP for Tarnon, Martin Bell, on the panel.

Mr Cook said: "We do not reject our heritage — we value our heritage. But we also need to be a forward-looking country prepared to face the challenges of the new millennium."

He said it was "important that we all project a positive image of our work and of the modern Britain abroad."

Mr Cook added: "We want to build in Britain a self-confident society, outward-looking and proud of its place as a leading partner in Europe and a pivotal nation in the world. We are creating an open, dynamic economy."

Cut-price BA airline ready to go

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

BRITISH AIRWAYS launched its cut-price airline yesterday with £100 return fares from Stansted to Rome, Milan and Copenhagen.

The no-frills airline, called Go, promises more cut-price destinations by the summer using a leased fleet of second hand aircraft though competitors said that they would match them.

Rival operators, including Richard Branson, have accused BA of setting up the airline to drive smaller competitors out of business. One rival firm, which asked not to be named, said: "Once BA has killed us off in a sky war they will pull the plug on cheap prices and Go."

However, David Magliano, of Go, said: "This is a stand alone operation that intends to make a profit within three years and wants to be around for a lot longer. To start, we have picked destinations our rivals don't fly to."

Rally driver says crash 'inevitable'

By ADRIAN LEE

A RALLY driver accused of shunting a young couple off the road to their deaths told a court yesterday that a crash was inevitable because of the poor driving of one of the victims.

Jason Humble accused Toby Exley of playing games, immature driving and deliberately blocking his way. He said that only "a complete lunatic" would have knocked another car off the road.

Mr Humble, 33, from Farnborough, Hampshire, who has driven rally cars for 15 years, faced almost two hours of cross-examination at the Old Bailey, during which it was alleged that he was telling a pack of lies. He accepted that he felt hostility towards the other driver because Mr Exley, 22, had allegedly hogged the outside lane of the A316 dual carriageway in Hanworth, southwest London, in October. Mr Exley and his girlfriend, Karen

Martin, 20, died in the crash. "The way he was carrying on I felt that an accident was inevitable, somehow," said Mr Humble, who was frequently asked to raise his voice.

Mr Humble said that he flashed his lights as Mr Exley's Ford Fiesta XR2 travelled at about 35mph. David Perry, for the prosecution, asked why he had not simply waited the few hundred yards until the road widened into three lanes.

"What did you want me to do?" replied Mr Humble. "Stop to have a cup of tea? I had tried to wait. He was insistent on playing games with me."

Mr Humble said he came within 10ft of Mr Exley's car, but was now adamant that there had been no contact. He denies two charges of manslaughter and two of causing death by dangerous driving. The trial continues.

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AY APRIL 2 1998

Experts who will rebrand Britain

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I'm no hero, says captain hailed as man of the match

CAPTAIN John Hackett demonstrated yesterday the calm reserve that helped to save the lives of the Leeds United football team. His emergency landing of a burning plane was just part of his job, he said, and he did not want all the fuss. He also refused to say which football team he supports.

Cool airline crew passes on praise for soccer team's survival in plane blaze, reports Russell Jenkins

In their news conference at Speke airport, the crew singled out Mr O'Leary for special thanks for the way he paid attention to the routine pre-flight safety announcements which allowed him to open the hatch above one wing

which is not normally opened, to help the passengers to escape. "We carried out the evacuation in 30 seconds and that is why we are all here now." Miss Dutton, 33, from Higher Tranmere, Liverpool, said that at first there was confusion and signs of panic among passengers, before order was restored.



The crew who made a team effort: Helen Dutton, John Hackett, Garry Lucas, and Nicola Mee, who has been flying for three weeks

and help many passengers to escape. Miss Dutton said: "David O'Leary told me he would like to thank Nicola because she had gone down the plane to point out how to open the exits in the event of an emergency. He said that in future he would always pay attention to what stewardesses tell him. He was able to get the

exit open and get people out of the doors to safety." Miss Mee, from St Helens, said she was looking forward to her fourth week of flying because, if anything, the emergency had given her greater confidence. Asked his reaction to being hailed as a hero, Captain Hackett, who lives with his wife Diane at a Derbyshire

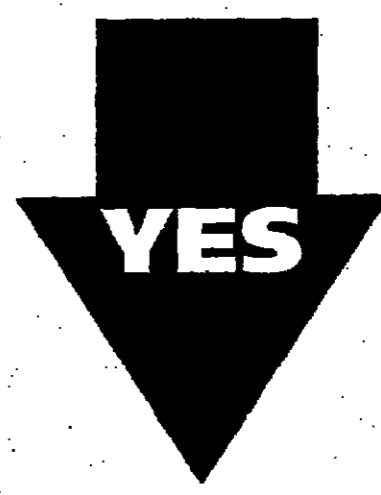
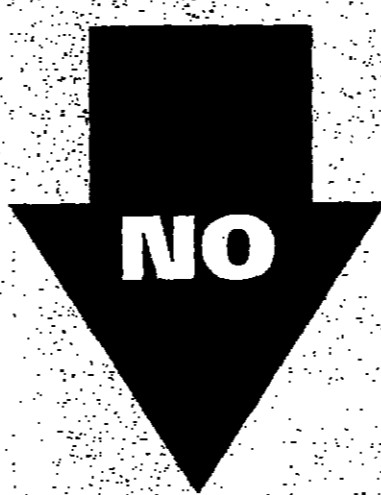
cottage, said: "I find it all very embarrassing because any other pilot would have acted in the same way." He confessed to feeling no emotion at the time, and refused with a smile to reveal whether he supports a football team.

The crew are to be guests of honour at Leeds's home match against Chelsea next Wednesday. Peter Ridsdale, the club chairman, sent his appreciation of the crew by fax to the Emerald Airways operations manager, Andrew Jones. He said: "Whilst I appreciate words are wholly inadequate to thank Captain Hackett specifically, but also all the members of your flight and cabin crew who showed such

skill and expertise in bringing the plane carrying the Leeds United football team down to safety. At times like this, many people reflect and many people dwell on what might have been, but as far as we are concerned we just wish to underline our gratitude for the efficiency and coolness in a crisis shown by your staff."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Mother loses custody

A woman who twice went to prison for refusing her former lover contact with their son has lost custody of him. Two Appeal Court judges ruled that the six-year-old boy should live with his father, 37, from Derby.

The woman, 34, from Northampton, who has two other children, had claimed that her former partner was "sexually deviant". Lady Justice Butler-Sloss said the mother's view was not an accurate reflection of a "perfectly good and decent father".

Merson fined for speeding

The Middlesbrough and England midfielder Paul Merson was fined £60 with £12 costs after admitting doing 79mph in a 50mph limit. Teesside magistrates endorsed his licence with three penalty points, but he escaped a driving ban after the court was told that he needed his car to commute to the South of England to see his family.

Crime squad launched

Britain's first national detective force aimed at fighting organised crime was launched by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary. The National Crime Squad will have 1,450 officers in Bristol, Manchester and London under its director-general, Roy Penrose, a former senior Scotland Yard detective. They will be seconded from local forces.

Smoking ruling

Lord Irvine of Lairg gives his first judicial ruling today as a member of the House of Lords. The Lord Chancellor will give the lead judgment on the final appeal by Peter Boddington, a London to Brighton commuter, against a £10 fine for lighting up on a non-smoking train. He says the rail company's ban is unreasonable and unlawful.

Golfers' ultimate air shot

Two golf balls collided in mid-air when players in separate games teed off simultaneously for the 10th and 11th holes at Sturminster Marshall, Dorset. The club secretary said: "When you think the balls are only 14 in in diameter and the tees 330 yards apart, it's amazing." William Hill, the bookmakers, said: "The odds are over a million to one."

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Cabinet favours Smith as best bet to 'stop Ken'

Andrew Pierce and Ian Murray on Labour's quest to prevent Ken Livingstone standing for mayor of London

CHRIS SMITH is the new ministerial favourite to prevent the leftwinger Ken Livingstone from becoming Labour's candidate in the election for a London mayor.

Mr Smith, the Culture Secretary, has the backing of senior Cabinet members and is being urged to seek the Labour nomination after Frank Dobson's decision to stay out of the race.

Asked by *The Times* yesterday whether he would rather be Secretary of State for Health or mayor of London, Mr Dobson replied: "Secretary of State for Health. It's the job I always wanted and it's the job I have got. I mean to go on doing it." He said that his tenure at the Department of Health was going well and he intended "to go on staying there".

If Mr Smith stood with the backing of Downing Street, the early frontrunner, Glenda Jackson, would be prepared to stand aside to prevent the vote being split.

Yesterday government sources were also talking up the prospects of Tony Banks, the Sports Minister and last chairman of the Greater London Council, making a return. The sources said that

Mr Banks, a London MP, could also beat Mr Livingstone.

The campaign to persuade Mr Smith to stand is gathering momentum. A senior minister pointed out that Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, and Ron Davies, the Welsh Secretary, were running for the Scottish parliament and the Welsh assembly.

"We have a Cabinet minister for Scotland and Wales, why not one for the London assembly? Don't rule out Chris Smith. He can beat Livingstone. He is popular and respected in London," the minister said.

Mr Smith, 46, is regarded by his supporters as the younger, more acceptable version of new Labour than Mr Dobson. But the fact that he is not closely identified with Mr Blair would work to his advantage when American-style primaries are held among London Labour members.

With Mr Smith's future advancement in the Cabinet being in question, the advocates of his candidacy hope that he would abandon Westminster to run for the London job. If in next month's referendum Londoners vote for a London assembly, as expected,

legislation will be passed next year to enable the mayor to be in post for the millennium celebrations.

Tony Blair launched Labour's manifesto for the proposed new assembly for London yesterday but refused to be drawn on whether Mr Livingstone should be able to stand. "Today we are not discussing who stands as a candidate — that's not important. What is important is that we are giving London the chance to have a strong political figure to tackle the issues that are most important to Londoners, like crime, like transport, like the environment," he said.

But, contrary to Mr Blair's assertion, discussions are continuing at the highest level of the party about how to block Mr Livingstone. "He will not be the candidate — that's certain," one minister said last night. One option would be for the party's national executive to veto his place on the shortlist.

Ms Jackson's strategists will open talks with senior London MPs today to prepare to launch her campaign after next month's referendum. But one of her supporters said: "We will not split the vote.



There will be only one official candidate, whoever has the best chance of beating Ken."

Private polls of Labour activists, who will have a decisive say in choosing the candidate, show that Mr Livingstone is way ahead of Ms Jackson. "It is a big gap but he can be caught," the Jackson supporter said. Mr Dobson had been seen

as the only Cabinet-backed candidate who could beat Mr Livingstone, there being doubts about whether Ms Jackson could prevail. The emergence of Mr Smith, a popular figure in the parliamentary party, has changed the landscape. The MP for Islington South and Finsbury would campaign with the full backing of the formidable

Labour Party election machine. But if he resists the pressure to stand down it could be a battle between Mr Banks and Ms Jackson, whose fame as an Oscar-winning actress could, her supporters say, help to reinforce London's stature among the world's big cities.

Leading article, page 23

Complex Lords show is long way from the final curtain

REFORM of the House of Lords is discussed as if it were merely an updating of *Iolanthe*, dealing with an antiquated and undemocratic part of the British heritage unfitting for the age of Cool Britannia.

Tony Blair often talks about the removal of the voting rights of hereditary peers in such simplified terms. But it is much more complicated with traps for both Government and Opposition.

With apt irony, in between debates in both Houses about the future of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, Viscount Cranborne, the Tory leader in the Lords, delivered an elegant and thoughtful lecture to *Politica* on "Parliament, Government and the Constitutional Balance". He spoke of the threat to Parliament from an "already over-mighty Prime Minister", typified by the use of pre-legislative referendums ("an outrage").

But his most interesting reflections were about the Lords, or rather the Commons, since he believes that the latter is the key to parliamentary reform. William Hague has also talked about Commons reform, though the Tories have so far offered few positive proposals. There is a big opportunity for them to exploit the caution of Labour whips.

Lord Cranborne floated several good ideas: strengthening the work of the Public Accounts Committee, reforming the scrutiny of European legislation, beefing up local government to reduce the loan on Parliament, changing the parliamentary year, reducing the scope for ministers to make law by issuing regulations, and, above all, reducing the number of government departments (in view of the information technology revolution) and gradually cutting the number of MPs.

Only when the position of the Commons is clear will it be "possible to define how the second chamber is to perform the proper function of an upper house in a complementary system — to act as a check on the Lower House". Merely removing hereditary peers raises as many questions as it answers. The link between their removal, in a Bill

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

days ago, have urged what has become known as the Disraeli option: attempting to outflank the Government with the party's own long-term reform proposals (as the Tories did over the franchise in 1871). The implicit threat is that the Tories would oppose any Bill abolishing hereditary peers unless accompanied by long-term proposals. After a lengthy discussion, the Shadow Cabinet recently decided to continue the wait-and-see tactics, though this is a matter of timing, probably until after the Government has shown more of its hand.

The Tories can obstruct and embarrass, but little more. Mr Hague cannot in the long term afford to be seen as opposing reform of the Lords if he wants to escape from the diehard redoubt. The Government also needs to produce its own proposals for the future of the Lords if it wants to outflank the Tories. It is likely to be a long and involved story. We have so far only heard the overture.

PETER RIDDELL

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: trade and industry questions; debate initiated by Lib Dem on the arms trade; debate on second crossing of River Swale. In the Lords: Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill, third reading; Social Security Bill, committee; debate on call to relocate Lindisfarne Gospels in the North East

Blair is 'building up power'

By JAMES LANDALE

TONY BLAIR was accused yesterday of deliberately concentrating power in Downing Street at the expense of Parliament.

Defending Parliament's right to scrutinise the executive, Viscount Cranborne, Tory leader in the Lords, called for fresh powers for the Commons and a reformed House of Lords. He said the Government's increasing use of pre-legislative referendums, focus groups and constitutional reforms were a "deliberate project" aimed at "the steady accretion of power to Mr Blair... and the steady diminution of the authority of Parliament".

Lord Cranborne, delivering a lecture to the *Politica* think-tank, added: "If Mr Blair is successful, it will be the greatest redistribution of power in our country for generations — and the loser... will be Parliament itself."

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MPs condemn watchdog over charity fraud

FRAUD and maladministration among Britain's 184,000 registered charities are going unchecked because of complacency, inertia and bad management at the Charity Commission, the Public Accounts Committee said yesterday.

The committee said it was "unacceptable" that one third of charities failed to provide annual accounts in 1996. It accused the commission, which is responsible for registering and regulating charities, of being "too passive" in monitoring and investigating cases of suspected abuse.

The report took the commission to task in almost every important aspect of its work, and criticised it for failing to take advantage of new, stronger powers of regulation that it was given in 1993.

Its findings come at a crucial time for the charitable sector and will be closely scrutinised by the Government. Ministers have said that they expect voluntary organisations to provide more public services, and to perform a vital role in the Government's welfare reform programme.

David Davis, chairman of the committee and Tory MP for Halton, said that it was wrong for the commission to assume that charity fraud was only a minor problem without first gathering the evidence to prove that this was the case.

"I am concerned that the commission is too complacent about the possibility of abuse in the charity sector and has shown a lack of management grip in its regulation of the sector," he said.

Mr Davis added that the commission needed to do far more to regain and retain public confidence. "British people are very generous and are happy to donate very large

Commissioners accused of failing to investigate cases of suspected abuse, reports Alexandra Freen

sums to charity. They do so without question, in the belief that charity status cannot be abused," he said.

Given the fact that members of the public relied on the commission's official register of charities for information about charitable activity, the commission said that it was unacceptable that the register was only 76 per cent accurate, well below the official accuracy target of 90 per cent.

They admonished the commission for failing properly to check that prospective trustees of newly-registered charities had not previously been removed from similar posts by the commission or by the courts. It also criticised the commission for its "lack of rigour" in applying new monitoring arrangements designed to track cases of suspected fraud or maladministration.

The committee expressed concern that only 8 per cent of the commission's staff were dedicated to investigations.



Davis: said commission was too complacent

and urged the commission to review this allocation. It also called on the commission to develop a clear policy for dealing with charities that consistently ignored its requests for information about their activities.

According to the Charity Commission's last annual report, the number of investigations into suspected abuse or maladministration at charities was 280 in 1996, an increase of 25 on the previous year. The commission identified fundraising abuse as "a particular area of concern" after a 25 per cent increase in investigations, from 55 to 69, between 1995 and 1996. The Charity Commission, which has nearly 600 staff, had a budget of £21 million for 1996-97.

The PAC report also criticised the commission for failing to strike an appropriate balance between its responsibility for regulating charities and its role in advising them. As a result, it said, too little attention was paid by the commission to promoting public confidence in the charitable sector.

Any drop in the public's confidence could hit charities hard. A report published by the Charities Aid Foundation last year showed that the growth in voluntary income of UK charities was slowing down. Between them, registered charities have an annual income of around £16 billion and assets of £35 billion.

The Charity Commission: Regulation and Support of Charities. (The Stationery Office; £8.80 excluding P&P)

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Out of time: the poster of Tony Hargessell and his photo-clock business. He went bust after the Leeds Tec turned him down for a grant

By PAUL WILKINSON

Failed businessman wins timely apology

A TRAINING council has apologised to a businessman it turned down for a grant and then used in a promotional advertising campaign.

Tony Hargessell's business failed after the Leeds Training and Enterprise Council refused to back his idea of combining a clock with a photo-frame. Then he was amazed to see himself in an advertisement praising the government-backed organisation for its "help" in launching his "photo-clocks".

The advertisement, complete with his picture, quoted him as saying: "With support from the Tec, New Enterprise has made me realise my dream and get my business under

Age Concern helper 'sacked for being too old'

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

AGE CONCERN has been accused of ageism by a former employee who was allegedly dismissed for being too old.

Gwyneth Niman lost her part-time job selling insurance for the charity when she reached her 70th birthday. For the past three years she has

Age Concern helper 'sacked for being too old'

continued as a volunteer while campaigning for her job back.

Mrs Niman, now 73, said: "It's not as if I can't do the job. They still want me to work but because I'm past 70 they won't pay me. I couldn't believe it when they told me to leave as I approached my 70th birthday. Age Concern has been trying to persuade companies to keep elderly staff but then they do this to me."

Age Concern helper 'sacked for being too old'

Not only does Mrs Niman help out as a volunteer, but when her younger replacement goes on holiday, she fills in for him. She has recently enrolled for a part-time computer course at a technical college to keep up to date with

Age Concern helper 'sacked for being too old'

business technology. Mrs Niman, from Cowbridge, Glamorgan, was being paid £280 a month when her services were dispensed with after four years. She worked two days a week at the charity's office in Cardiff.

She said: "I will go all the way to the European Courts of Justice. It is awkward because of my voluntary work with the charity but my grouse is with head office who made this stupid rule." She is being supported in her fight by her husband Basil, a retired GP, and her three children.



Niman: lost her job when she reached 70

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Israel makes conditional offer to withdraw from Lebanon

ISRAELI intelligence was blamed by Palestinians yesterday for the murder of the "most wanted" Hamas militant whose disfigured body was identified after he was shot and then blown apart by a remote-controlled car bomb in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

Sunday's killing had been described originally as a "work accident" by an unknown Islamic militant making the car bomb. It was only yesterday that it was disclosed that the victim had been shot dead first and had been top of Israel's wanted list since escaping capture in 1995.

Within hours of the announcement that Muhyideen al-Sharif, 32, a Palestinian master bomb-maker, had been killed, Hamas vowed revenge and a senior Palestinian minister called the killing an Israeli assassination. In Bethlehem, a Palestinian mob pledged new suicide attacks stoned Israeli troops who retaliated with rubber bullets.

Security experts estimate that Hamas has at least 100 young volunteers to carry out suicide attacks.

Israeli security forces went to potential trouble spots in anticipation of Hamas revenge attacks despite a flat denial by Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, that

Troops are likely to remain bogged down as they have been since the March 1978 invasion, Christopher Walker writes

including a new pressure group formed by the mothers of soldiers — for a pullout from what many campaigners refer to as "the Lebanese mud". Israeli troops have been bogged down in parts of south Lebanon since March 1978.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, said after the vote: "The meaning of this decision is that

Israel is expressing formally here for the first time, in a detailed and organised fashion, its seriousness and determination to leave Lebanon, linked to the required security arrangements."

The decision came as peace talks with the Palestinians remained deadlocked. Some critics of Mr Netanyahu accused him of using

the Lebanon issue to deflect attention from the Palestinian problem. But the Prime Minister, who is also noted for his keen appraisal of Israeli public opinion, denied that the decision to accept UN Security Council Resolution 425 was just "a declaration" and called on the Lebanese Government to enter into negotiations with Israel, which has lost four soldiers this year in south Lebanon and lost 39 in 1997.

He said that under a plan put forward by Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister, he was making a pullout conditional on adequate guarantees that Lebanon would deploy its army southward to

prevent cross-border terrorist attacks by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah (Party of God), who are fighting a bloody war against the occupying forces. Lebanon and, more importantly Syria, the main foreign powerbroker in Lebanon, swiftly rejected the Israeli initiative.

President Hrawi of Lebanon, known for his close connections with the Syrian regime of President Assad, said his Government did not intend to negotiate over Israel's offer. Nabih Berri, a former warlord and now speaker of the Beirut parliament, dismissed Israel's approval of a conditional with-

drawal from the nine-mile-wide "buffer zone."

"There is nothing new in the Israeli position," Mr Berri said. "The approved headline is the UN Resolution 425, but the content is something else. This is not the implementation of 425. It is a political plan to cover aggression against south Lebanon."

Israeli officials, aware in advance of the likely Arab reaction, took comfort from the view that the Arab world would be diplomatically wrong-footed if it was forced to campaign against an Israeli troop withdrawal from Arab territory. They also noted that Kamal

Kharrazi, the Iranian Foreign Minister, had stated that the Hezbollah fighters would have achieved their goals if Israel withdrew its occupation troops.

Silvan Shalom, Israel's Deputy Defence Minister, accused Syria of changing its tune by linking an Israeli pullout from Lebanon with an Israeli withdrawal from the Syrian Golan Heights, occupied since 1967.

Diplomatic analysts said that Mr Assad, who desperately wants to regain the Golan, had little interest in reducing the current heavy pressure on Israeli forces inside the occupied zone.

Revenge fear as Hamas militant is assassinated

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI intelligence was blamed by Palestinians yesterday for the murder of the "most wanted" Hamas militant whose disfigured body was identified after he was shot and then blown apart by a remote-controlled car bomb in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

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Security experts estimate that Hamas has at least 100 young volunteers to carry out suicide attacks.

Israeli security forces went to potential trouble spots in anticipation of Hamas revenge attacks despite a flat denial by Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, that

Israel had played any part in the fugitive's death. Al-Sharif was shot three times and hours later his body was mangled almost beyond recognition when the car bomb exploded.

Western security experts were treating the Hamas pledge of revenge seriously. Four suicide bombs detonated in revenge for the Israeli killing by booby-trapped telephone in 1996 of Al-Sharif's mentor, known as "the Engineer", killed more than 50 Israelis and wounded hundreds.

Reflecting grassroots sentiment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where anti-Israeli feeling is near boiling point because of the recent collapse of the peace process, Nabil Shaath, the Palestinian Planning Minister and a close aide of Yasser Arafat, blamed Israel for the killing.

"This is just another new crime, a new assassination carried out by Israel, murdering someone and then placing him in a car and then detonating the car," said Mr Shaath, a key figure in the now deadlocked Israeli-Palestinian peace talks who is regarded as one of the more moderate members of the Palestinian leadership.

Initial reports had said that the victim had blown himself

up by accident while preparing a suicide car bomb for use against an unspecified Israeli target during the peace mission of Dennis Ross, the US envoy. It was only yesterday that the identification of his remains and the news of the prior shooting emerged.

"We were told by the Governor of Ramallah that the autopsy report showed he was killed three hours before the explosion," Mr Sharif's elder brother said, adding that he had been shot twice in the chest and once in the leg.

"Muhyideen is gone, but tens will replace him. Yahya Ayash ('the Engineer') was gone, thousands replaced him. Jihad (holy war) will continue," Ibrahim al-Sharif, 34, said as the family mourned the death in the north Jerusalem Arab neighbourhood of Beit Hanina. The funeral will take place today.

Despite official Israeli denials of involvement in the killing, many politicians could scarcely disguise their glee.

"I do not know whether congratulations are due in Hebrew or in Arabic. But whoever brought about his demise deserves all praise and the thanks of all of Israel," said Ephraim Sneh, a leading member of the opposition Labour Party and a former general.



An Israeli soldier watches over prisoners during the campaign to occupy south Lebanon in March 1978

Bus massacre was pretext for invasion

UN SECURITY Council Resolution 425 was passed 20 years ago, on March 19, 1978 (Christopher Walker writes).

The cause of the border crisis which it was intended to resolve was the limited Israeli invasion known as "Operation Litani" in which Israeli troops, ostensibly motivated by a massacre of bus passengers inside Israel, attacked to push Palestinian terrorists then operating in south Lebanon north of the Litani River.

As with other key UN

resolutions dealing with the Middle East crisis, the interpretation of their meaning differs. Israel insisted yesterday that it was following the resolution, and yet the decision it took was conditional on the Lebanese army agreeing to provide security along its northern border, while Arab leaders insisted that the resolution meant an unconditional Israeli withdrawal.

In the English-language version, the resolution states that the UN Security Council:

territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its boundaries.

□ Calls upon Israel to withdraw its forces from all Lebanese territory.

□ Decides to establish immediately a UN interim force for southern Lebanon (Unifil) to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces, restore international peace and security and assist the Lebanese Government in ensuring the return of its authority in the area.

□ Requests the Secretary-

General to report to the Council within 24 hours on the resolution's implementation.

Writing in the Tel Aviv daily *Yedioth Ahronot*, Ephraim Sneh, a Labour party politician, asked recently what has changed in Lebanon since that original resolution. "Nothing," he wrote, "except for the fact that the enemy has become tougher and more dangerous, since the PLO terrorists have been replaced by Hezbollah terrorists."

Beirut insists on full pullout

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

PRESIDENT HRAWI of Lebanon said yesterday that Beirut would not negotiate any conditions for an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon.

"We will not negotiate for one second over Resolution 425 because if we did, then the Security Council resolution would become null," he said during an official visit to Abu Dhabi. "I do not see in such a withdrawal the peace that we want for the whole Middle East region."

Lebanon insists that the United Nations resolution, passed 20 years ago, calls for an unconditional withdrawal. But the Beirut Government has been put under strong pressure from Syria to refuse a bilateral deal with Israel. Syria fears that any settlement in Lebanon would reduce the pressure on Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights.

If a unilateral Israeli pullout occurs, Lebanon and Syria must decide whether to allow Iranian-backed Hezbollah fighters to penetrate into the nine-mile buffer zone allowing them to launch attacks directly across the border. Any such attack could provoke a sharp Israeli military response, which might involve a strike against Syrian troops in Lebanon.

Iran, the main backer of the Hezbollah fighters, has given the Israeli proposal to withdraw a guarded welcome. It said if Israeli troops left, Hezbollah guerrillas would have achieved their goals.

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Kharrati, the leader of the fighters, had stated that the goal of the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon is to create a "new Lebanon" where all Lebanese are equal and where the Syrian occupation is ended.

Silvan Shalom, the Defense Minister, is changing the Israeli position on an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon since 1997.

Diplomatic pressure on Assad, who is expected to regain the Golan Heights in reducing the pressure on Israel's occupied territories.

Beirut insists on full pullout

BY MICHAEL BISHARA
DIPLOMACY EDITOR

President Ezer Weizman said that the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon is a precondition for any peace agreement.

"We will not accept a partial withdrawal," he said. "We want a full withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon."

He said that the 425 Israeli soldiers in Lebanon would be withdrawn during the negotiations.

He said that the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon is a precondition for any peace agreement.

حکومت اسرائيل

Papon warns jury on 'road to Calvary'

IN AN ANGRY and emotional appeal from the dock, the alleged Nazi collaborator Maurice Papon demanded an acquittal and accused French prosecutors of driving his wife to her grave by persecuting him on trumped-up charges.

Before the jury retired to consider its verdict last night, M Papon, 57, addressed the Bordeaux court and strenuously denied that he had committed crimes against humanity by sending more than 1,500 Jews to their deaths when he was a senior official in the wartime Vichy regime.

By turns furious and self-pitying, M Papon wept as he spoke of his wife of 66 years, who died of cancer last week at 88. "They have killed her bit by bit. The coup de grace came when the prosecution demanded 20 years' imprisonment," he said.

"This has been an unprecedented media pillorying, made up of lies, insults and infamy aimed at inflaming public opinion. This has been my road to Calvary. A false crime has been laid at my

Ben Macintyre in Bordeaux hears a dramatic plea by the man accused of sending Jews to Nazi death camps

door, in this false trial." As throughout the six months of the trial, M Papon insisted he had been made a scapegoat for French wartime guilt.

Quoting Kafka's *The Trial*, the former bureaucrat demanded: "Why me?" and then supplied his own answer: "I am the designated guilty man, a necessary symbol. Not a man, but a myth. When they could not produce irrefutable proof of crimes against humanity, they had to build a judicial monster."

The prosecution argued that M Papon, as the youthful and powerful secretary-general of the Bordeaux region, had zealously collaborated with the occupying Nazis to round up Jews and ship them to concentration camps, consigning hundreds to death at the stroke of a pen. M Papon,

however, painted himself yesterday as a patriot and Resistance fighter who had obeyed the orders of General Charles de Gaulle and served the interests of France by remaining at his post. "The administration remained the only bulwark against the occupiers. We saved what could be saved."

Comparing himself to Alfred Dreyfus, France's most famous victim of miscarried justice, M Papon said that his trial threatened to tarnish the image of France itself. "Take care, for France will be affected by your verdict," he warned the jury of three magistrates and nine members of the public. "There are those who would rejoice at seeing France linked to Germany in the Jewish genocide."

M Papon's lawyers insist

that he was unaware of the fate of the deported Jews and that, far from conspiring in their deaths, he did his best to alleviate their sufferings.

M Papon was admitted to hospital as planned after the jury began to consider the evidence. But despite his failing health he had lost none of his arrogance. "You will enter the history books," he sneered at state prosecutor, Henri Desclaux, "but through the servants' entrance."

The charges against him carry a life sentence, but prosecutors have asked for a reduced term of 20 years. M Papon described that decision as a sign of the moral contradictions in the accusations against him. The charge of crimes against humanity should be reserved for "absolute monsters", such as Pol Pot and Adolf Hitler, he said.

"Can you be 15, 30 or 60 per cent guilty of a crime against humanity. It's all or nothing. I'm guilty or innocent," he told the jury at the climax of the longest trial in French history: "My fate is in your hands."



Maurice Papon leaving court yesterday after enduring "lies, insults and infamy"

Bosnian Serbs switch to the mark

FROM TOM WALKER
IN BELGRADE

THE Bosnian Serb Government yesterday declared the German mark an official temporary currency as the Yugoslav dinar was devalued sharply, threatening financial chaos in the region.

Milorad Dodik, the Bosnian Serb Prime Minister, announced that all public salaries and pensions would be paid in marks this month. Introducing a "double monetary system", he said Bosnian Serbs would be able to open mark bank accounts to guard against the inflation about to hit neighbouring Serbia.

There yesterday's 45 per cent dinar devaluation to six marks reawakened memories of the currency's collapse earlier in the decade, and the hyperinflation as the former Yugoslavia disintegrated.

The introduction of a United Nations arms embargo against the Belgrade regime as a punishment for its bloody clampdown on ethnic Albanian separatists in Kosovo furthered the mood of despair.

Penniless German spouses earn right to 'pocket money'

FROM DEBORAH COLCUTT IN BONN

GERMAN spouses will be forced to pay their partners "pocket money" if they earn hugely disproportionate salaries under a new law introduced by the Federal High Court.

The change in legislation comes after a court case highlighted the plight of hundreds of thousands of husbands and wives who are dependent on their spouses for a basic standard of living.

The court decided that if one partner is unemployed or on a low income, the spouse is obliged to hand over up to 7 per cent of his or her net salary.

The ruling came after a creditor took a man to court because he did not earn enough on a salary of £150 a month to pay off his £1,000 debt and his wife, on a monthly income of £1,800, refused to clear his obligations for him.

The amount will be calculated by adding together the two incomes and subtracting between five and seven per cent, depending on the salary of the higher earner.

"The ruling clearly states that a certain amount should be paid by the higher earner in the family so that the other has enough money to do what he or she wants without having to substantiate it," said Dr Wolfgang Kruger, the press spokesman at the Federal High Court. "Gone are the days when the majority of women didn't work and relied on their husbands for everything. I can remember friends of my mother who were forced to write down every expenditure and had to ask their husbands for money to buy even a loaf of bread."

Dr Stefan Wehber, a sociologist, said the situation was now more often reversed. "It is often so nowadays, in areas for example of heavy industry where the men have been made redundant from the coal pits and steel works that the women are the only ones to find work," he said.

"It is ironic, but now some of these men are having to ask their wives for money to go for a beer with their friends in the evening."

Some men have to ask their wives for money to go for a beer?

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Archive to hand over Stalin-era documents

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN has ordered that a historical treasure trove of classified Stalin-era documents, including handwritten notes by the Soviet dictator, should be made public.

In an unexpected move, the Kremlin announced yesterday that the Russian leader had ordered the presidential archive to hand over the unique documents to the commission for the rehabilitation of the victims of Soviet repression.

"The presidential archive holds many materials still unknown to society," said Sergei Yastrzhembskiy, the Kremlin spokesman. "They include documents from the organs of repression to the Communist Party asking for its approval of their decisions: letters of the arrested and convicted; lists of the repressed; transcripts of interrogations and trials." He added that many of the documents contain resolutions and short notes "made personally by Stalin".

The material is likely to arouse huge interest among historians, who continue to dig for clues about the mindset of the Soviet despot, who was responsible for the deaths of millions of his countrymen and who helped to turn the Soviet Union into history's mightiest empire.

Experts warned that it was unlikely that the new documents, part of the Communist Party Politburo's archive, would disclose any startling new findings. But they could provide unique details about the secretive dictator, his closest aides and the machinery of terror that they ran.

Edvard Radzinsky, the author of a recent biography of Stalin who was allowed to work with the documents for research, forecast that Stalin's personal files would attract most attention. Among the most fascinating passages is the description in Stalin's diary about the illness that led to the death of

his wife Nadezhda Alliluyeva, whose death remains a mystery amid persistent suspicions that she took her own life.

There is also correspondence between Stalin and Vyacheslav Molotov, his Foreign Minister, relating to a Council of Ministers meeting at which the dictator believed his faithful minister had behaved improperly.

Nikita Petrov, from Memorial, the organisation devoted to rehabilitating the victims of Stalinism, said that it was shameful that the authorities had not revealed these documents earlier. "Most of the information contained in these documents is already known to us, so you have to ask why it has taken so long for the Kremlin to publish them," he said. "Frankly, they should open it all up. There is no justification for keeping the evidence of repression locked up, be it in Stalin's time, or Brezhnev or Andropov or even Gorbachev."

However, for ordinary Russians the publication of the documents could still play an important part in the process of education about the horrors that Stalin perpetrated on his people. According to the late historian Dmitri Volkogonov, more than 21 million citizens of the Soviet Union were arrested from 1929 to 1953, with only one third surviving. Mass grave sites from the height of the purges in 1937-38 are still being found across the former Soviet Union to this day.

However, an opinion poll published last month revealed a disturbing trend in Russia. Possibly influenced by the poverty and anarchy of post-Soviet life in Russia, nearly a third of Russians said that Stalin should be remembered for defeating Hitler rather than repressing his own countrymen. A third see him as a tyrant, but the same number insisted not enough was known about him to pass judgment.



The Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji at Greenwich yesterday while on a visit to London

China 'to bypass Hong Kong law'

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG'S leading opposition politician, Martin Lee, attacked a proposed law that he said would put Chinese institutions in the former British territory and the Hong Kong Government itself beyond the reach of the Hong Kong legal system.

"Hong Kong is the only Chinese community in the world that enjoys the rule of law," Mr Lee said in an interview yesterday. You do not find this rule of law in China, Taiwan, Macao or Singapore. But here, in Hong Kong, the

basic concept is that all people are equal in the eyes of the law."

He complained that the proposal before the provisional Legislative Council, a body chosen by Beijing, would make Chinese entities exempt from certain laws, "effectively putting them above the law". It was the substitution of Hong Kong's rule of law with Beijing's "rule of man", he said.

He said that when Hong Kong was a British colony it was not run on the "one country, two systems" principle that had prevailed since

its return to China last 30 June. "This is yanking the carpet out from under the legal system in Hong Kong," Mr Lee said earlier, adding that it would "invite corruption".

□ Broadcaster backed: Hong Kong's legislature voted by 32 to nine with one abstention yesterday to endorse the editorial independence of Radio Television Hong Kong, the Government-funded broadcaster, following a controversy over media freedom in recent weeks. (Reuters)

Foreign investors sought to revive 'Korean miracle'

Kim Dae Jung, right, was under house arrest in Seoul the last time David Watts interviewed him. Now he is visiting London as his country's President



FOR the leader of a country which has been bailed out by the international community and is haemorrhaging jobs at the rate of 10,000 a day, President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea strikes a coolly determined figure.

But as a devout Catholic who suffered years of jail and house arrest and at least two assassination attempts — one by the intelligence agency which his Prime Minister used to head — life seems to have prepared him for his new role as he struggles to bring his country back from the abyss.

"I knew that if I didn't die I would become the President based on the people's will in the future," Mr Kim said in London yesterday. "There were times when I thought that might not be realised but I knew that if I did not achieve it, it would be a disappointment, not a failure. History shows that those who fight for human rights and democracy win. I believed I would be the victor."

The President's task today is a good deal more complex than dealing with brutal military governments: he must bring Koreans — burnished by decades of colonialism and fierce regional rivalries, into nationalists if not xenophobes — to accept foreign investment on a large scale to help revive the "Korean miracle". The figures are staggering: total Korean foreign debt stands at \$187 billion (£112 billion) with ten small firms a day going out of business.

While campaigning for the presidency he opposed the International Monetary Fund bail-out, which eventually totalled \$57 billion, but soon swung his support behind the rescue plan.

"The perception is that foreign money is something we could borrow not invest — people believed we would be colonised if we

had too much foreign investment," he said. The reason is not hard to find: only 2 per cent of the South Korean gross domestic product is generated by foreign investment. In Malaysia it is 51 per cent and in Britain 28 per cent, so President Kim quotes the example of the Queen in convincing people of the merits of foreign investment: "The Queen wouldn't visit foreign investment projects if they were examples of colonisation."

In a round of meetings with bankers and politicians — including Tony Blair — during the Asia-Europe summit, which starts in London today, he will unashamedly seek European help, emphasising that Europe and Asia are interdependent. "A friend in need is a friend indeed," he says, "and Asian countries are in need of great help."

"I'm here as a salesperson but for mutual benefit. There are very good opportunities. I shall tell bankers that there are good businesses for sale. By buying them they will be helping the Korean economy by bringing in foreign exchange and expertise."

In two to three months he believes Korea will have all the necessary legislation, permitting foreign takeovers, foreign rental of land and access to stock and bond markets. Already the situation is beginning to turn around with a \$7 billion trade surplus so far this year which could rise to \$20 billion by year's end. In two years, he believes, Korea and its economy will be transformed from one dominated by the big octopus-like chaebol combines to large numbers of small and medium firms.

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Medicine men save rainforest

Gabriella Gamini sees Brazil's fires quenched by an ancient ritual

HEAVY rain fell over Brazil's Amazonian state of Roraima yesterday, quenching most of the fires which have for three months ravaged a large part of the state's savannah and rainforest. The deluge came just two days after two Indian shamans performed a rain-making ritual.

The Kayapo medicine men, Kukriti and Mantii, were brought to Roraima by the government organisation in charge of indigenous affairs on Monday, at the invitation of chiefs from seven tribes in Roraima. Their mission was to "call on the good spirits for rain".

Reinaldo Barbosa, of the National Institute of Amazonian Research, said last night: "The rain has not put out all the fires but with more rain it is only a matter of days before the flames stop spreading."

Fires, fuelled by six months of drought, have destroyed an area the size of England. But the sustained downpour, forecast to last at least four days, has put out all but two of the fire points across the 90,000 square miles that make up the state.

A hilly rainforest-covered area in the north of the state on the border with Venezuela, around the town of Pacaraima, where showers were not felt, was still aflame last night. Meanwhile it has reduced the



Antonio de Moura, a tomato producer, rejoices as rainwater flows through his parched plantation at Mucajai in Roraima state

fires which had spread into the reserve inhabited by the Stone Age Yanomami Indians in west Roraima.

Inhabitants in the state capital, Boa Vista, danced in the streets when the first showers began to fall on the drought and fire-affected lands on Tuesday evening. Nearly 3 in of rain fell in 12 hours, and the cloud of smoke which had been hanging over the city and

most of the state disappeared. Rain is normally expected in Roraima, the only Brazilian state which is in the Northern Hemisphere, by February, and its absence so far — blamed on the El Niño effect — caused the severest drought in 30 years.

The two Kayapo medicine men managed to escape from pursuing photographers in Boa Vista, saying that the

ritual would not work if "white men cast an evil eye on them", and took off on canoe to a jungle-flanked area of the Rio Branco. They had performed a ritual on the beach of a dried-up river, using creepers and other plants from their Xingu region to call on "the men up there" to send down rain.

Meteorologists had predicted rains for May and were surprised by the downfall.

When Kukriti and Mantii were spotted in the centre of Boa Vista yesterday, locals hugged and kissed them, thanking them for the rain.

Despite the euphoria, environmentalists issued a warning that the state still faced problems which would arise in the aftermath of the fires that have left behind an apocalyptic landscape in Roraima. "Farmers and Indians have

lost their crops, seeds have been burnt and the earth in the rainforest area has had irreparable damage done to it," said Paulo Adario, director of Greenpeace in Brazil. "People in Roraima now face hunger and disease, and malaria outbreaks have been reported across the state. We still have to evaluate how much flora and fauna was lost."

WORLD IN BRIEF

Italy hits back over Kosovans

Rome: Giorgio Napolitano, the Interior Minister, accused Mike O'Brien, the British Home Office Minister, of making "gratuitously offensive" remarks about Italy over Kosovan refugees who arrived at Heathrow from Rome last weekend without valid travel documents (Richard Owen writes). Signor Napolitano said he had found Mr O'Brien's suggestion that the Italian authorities had played "pass the parcel" with the 56 refugees "hasty".

The Kosovans said they had been detained at Rome airport, and sent to London on an Alitalia flight on the orders of Italian police. Signor Napolitano said that "as *The Times* reported", he had immediately agreed to take them back.

Gun dare pupil dies

Tourcoing, France: Hassan Atrane, 18, a high school pupil who was shot in the head by a classmate at school in northern France, has died in hospital in Lille. The victim had brought his father's pistol to school and then given it to a friend and dared him to shoot. The classmate, Foued Zarati, apparently thought the safety catch was on when he put the pistol to Atrane's head and pulled the trigger. Police in Tourcoing have opened an investigation into whether the shooting was an accident or a disguised suicide attempt. Atrane had apparently spoken of suicide recently. (AP)

Drug helicopters grounded

Mexico City: Mexico has grounded 72 ageing helicopters donated by the United States for the war on drugs, saying that they are unsafe. The Defence Ministry said it ordered the Huey UH-1H helicopters to be grounded until officials could determine what was causing mechanical failures. America donated the aircraft two years ago to help to wipe out marijuana and opium poppy crops being grown in Mexico and smuggled into the US. (Reuters)

Daughter fulfils novel wish

Bordeaux: Mazarine Pinget, 23, the illegitimate daughter of the late Francois Mitterrand, whose existence was revealed only a few years before his death, has sprung another surprise on France by announcing the publication of her first novel (writes Ben Macintyre). The partly autobiographical book, published today, represents the fulfilment of Mitterrand's wish that she should become a writer.

Castle's view is saved

Schwangau: A Bavarian town has rejected a plan to erect a 250-bed hotel opposite Neuschwanstein castle, right, built by King Ludwig II, after hundreds of opponents besieged the council. The fairytale castle in Schwangau attracts more than a million tourists a year. Bavaria's official for historical monuments said last week that its surroundings should not be turned into a local version of Disneyland. (AFP)



Woman saved in flooded lift

New York: A woman and her pet Jack Russell were rescued seconds from drowning after a lift plunged from the ground floor into a flooded basement (Tunku Varadarajan writes). Suzana Piamenta, 22, was saved by her husband and staff of the building, who climbed down the lift shaft and smashed open the roof with hammers. They found her up to her neck in water with the dog on her head.

Clinton turns deaf ear to complaints about his music

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON AND SAM KILEY IN JOHANNESBURG

HE MAY be the leader of the free world, but at heart Bill Clinton has remained a rebel, whether dodging the draft, failing to inhale or cranking up the volume of his personal boombox on board Air Force One.

Sometimes even a rebel can be chastised by his spouse, however, as the President discovered yesterday after he had kicked off his shoes, removed his hearing aids and drowned the travelling entourage with a favourite compact disc. "Bill, would you please turn that down?" Hillary Clinton told her husband as she castigated him for not reading briefing notes on the flight from Botswana to Senegal.

Before landing in the former French colony, Mr Clinton made a personal call to President Chirac to dispel



President Clinton on board Air Force One with his portable CD player and varied collection of music

fears that America was trying to supplant French influence in Africa.

"I think the President simply wanted to touch base with M Chirac so that this would not be seen in any way as pitting the United States against the French, which some have suggested," said a White House aide after the 15-

minute call. He said Mr Clinton asked the French President what issues he should raise in Senegal, where President Diouf has presided for 18 years and, at the age of 63, is thinking of running for another seven-year term.

President Clinton has always preferred to relax in the

air, whether playing cards on Marine One, his helicopter, listening to music or watching live sports and videos on board the specially designed Boeing 747. It takes him back to his days as a student and the long nights of the campaign trail.

On this occasion he had chosen a collection of songs by Paul Robeson, one of numerous compact discs on his desk in the aircraft's imitation Oval Office, as the First Lady entered and accused him of behaving as though he was in a dormitory.

"He must have at least a hundred CDs up there," Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary, said later. "He brings some of his collection with him when he travels. And he gets a lot from Chelsea."

Much as he considers himself in tune, however, the President's musical tastes are sometimes dubious and often dated. Previously he has been

known to listen to Simon and Garfunkel, Quincy Jones, Lyle Lovett and Jimmy Buffet. Fleetwood Mac's *Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow* is a favourite from the 1992 campaign, but White House aides have since been astonished to hear that Mr Clinton considered Kenny G, the schmaltzy saxophonist, as his musical idol.

They were less surprised to hear of the high jinx on Air Force One yesterday. Ever

since Mr Clinton was diagnosed last year with a hearing defect, for which he wears two small hearing aids, his aides have been forced to endure unparalleled decibel levels on the aircraft.

□ Gaborone: Festus Mogae was sworn in as Botswana's third president yesterday and pledged to keep the continent's oldest democracy on the capitalist path that has made it a rare African success story. (Reuters)

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New war to curb child-sex tourists

By MICHAEL BRYNOR
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

EUROPE and Asia yesterday launched a joint campaign to crack down on sex tourism and child abuse, involving 25 countries represented at the Asia-Europe summit that opens in London today.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and Domingo Siazon, his Philippines opposite number, lent support to measures adopted recently in Europe and Asia to train police in dealing with child abuse, caring for victims, gathering criminal evidence and pooling the resources of governments.

The Philippines, together with Thailand, Sri Lanka and India, is one of the main Asian destinations for child sex tourists. Mr Cook and Mr Siazon signed an agreement in Manila last August to step up co-operation and improve liaison between police forces. Mr Cook wants to extend such arrangements to the rest of Asia, and is backed by a number of European Union governments which have changed laws to allow the prosecution of paedophile tourists in their home countries.

Leading article, page 23

Dry state drinks to end of ban

Christopher Thomas reports that the end of prohibition will leave a lasting hangover in Haryana, India

THE rich young things of Delhi will soon be heading across the border in droves to resume drinking in the farming state of Haryana, which has just ended a calamitous 21-month experiment with prohibition.

They will be heading for India's biggest entertainment complex. Fireball discotheque, which was yesterday refurbishing its premises in readiness for the deluge after the formal end of the ban. It used to be crammed with 600 to 700 couples every Friday and Saturday night, but that dropped to no more than five — and sometimes none — for want of alcohol.

Many hotels have closed and hardly any are in profit. Fireball is celebrating the return of drinking with a huge party before reopening the discotheque, which is part of a unique — for India — entertainment and business complex called 32nd Milestone.

The hangover from prohibition will last years: Haryana is all but bankrupt and the restoration of legal drinking became inevitable after government employees rioted when there was no money to pay them. The roads are crumbling, state schools are in a dreadful condition, public transport costs have soared and drink-related crime has created a new generation of young hoodlums.

The reputation of the police, which nobody thought could sink any lower, has worsened because they extorted money from drinkers with alcohol on their breath or from those caught smuggling liquor into Haryana from neighbouring states. Police were the biggest bootleggers and cornered the business by prosecuting practically everybody in sight for alcohol violations. Eighty thousand cases are pending in the courts, which are on the point of collapse.

Money has started to flow back into Haryana's coffers. It has sold licences for millions of pounds, and in due course expects to earn more than £120 million a year from excise duties and other charges.

Hotel Groovie in Gurgaon, just over the border from Delhi — a bleak establishment belying its name — barely survived prohibition. Wedding receptions, a big money-puller, went outside the state and businessmen did their utmost to spend nights anywhere but Haryana. "Hardly any people came here," Data Ram Yadav, a room service steward, said. "We lost most of our tips. People are more generous when they drink."

Prateek Chawla, a resident of Gurgaon, said nobody stopped drinking during prohibition. "If you wanted booze, you simply asked the local policeman. The price mark-up was 100 to 200 per cent, depending on your desperation.

turned to village-brewed concoctions, which are as cheap as they are deadly.

Alka Goel, 21, promotions manager at 32nd Milestone, said she cannot wait for Fireball to reopen and for the youthful hordes to return. "We are the most happening place in Asia," she said. "It's like, cool. Haryana has been liberated. Police used to smell you like sniffer dogs — it was horrible. They planted liquor bottles in cars so they could demand money. Happy days are here again. Cool, really cool."



A drinker swallows some locally made alcohol yesterday in Haryana, where prohibition has been lifted

Before prohibition, Haryana had 24-hour liquor shops and was infamous for the extent of its wife-beating. Village women, whose campaign brought about prohibition, are mostly indifferent to the return of legal drinking, because nothing changed when it was banned. Those unable to afford the bootleggers' prices

Aircrash Britons in minefield escape

FROM CAROLINE GLUCK
IN PHNOM PENH

A BRITISH Embassy official and three British journalists escaped yesterday when a helicopter crash-landed in northern Cambodia and hit a landmine in the middle of a minefield. The pilot and two passengers, including Lawrence Pickup, the deputy British Ambassador, were slightly injured.

The helicopter was carrying a group of Western journalists from Siem Reap to the ancient Preah Vihear temple, which straddles the Thai border and was until this week a Khmer Rouge stronghold. The Government took control after hundreds of Khmer Rouge rebels defected.

The three injured were taken by helicopter to Siem Reap. The dozen or so other journalists, including Enver Solomon, the BBC correspondent in Bangkok, Alex Spillius, the *Daily Telegraph's* Bangkok correspondent, and Andy Eames, a British freelance photographer, spent the night at Preah Vihear.

Fighting broke out in the Cambodian capital between supporters and opponents of the ousted First Prime Minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who returned to the country on Monday after nearly nine months in exile. About 500 people threw stones and used sticks in clashes before police intervened. At least three people were injured, one seriously.

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Athlete put through diplomatic hoops

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

A NORTH Korean basketball star who is said to be the tallest man in the world is at the centre of a diplomatic dispute in Washington over his dream of shooting hoops for an American team.

Michael Ri, 28, entered the *Guinness Book of World Records* this year as the tallest living human, measuring 7ft 9in. His attempts to play basketball for an American league team have been altogether less successful. Under sanctions imposed after the Korean War, Mr Ri needs a Treasury Department licence.

The Clinton Administration, irritated by Pyongyang's stonewalling in talks to reduce tension on the Korean peninsula, has balked at allowing him to enter America as a player.

Washington officials said yesterday that admitting Mr Ri, who could command a multi-million dollar salary and much media attention,

would represent a significant easing of existing sanctions. "We are reviewing the request to determine if the intended purpose is consistent with US sanctions policy," said Jamie Rubin, the State Department spokesman.

If Mr Ri had agreed to defect, he would probably be playing on the circuit already. He changed his name from Ri Myong Hun in honour of Michael Jordan, the US basketball star, but has been unwilling to renounce his North Korean citizenship.

He is two inches taller than George Muresan, the tallest player in the National Basketball Association, and American and Canadian coaches were impressed by his agility and shooting ability.

"He's probably more athletic than George but not as powerful," said Bob Zuffelato of the Toronto Raptors. "It is awesome when you look at the guy. You... just gawk."



Ri: entry to US blocked

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Scars that are more than skin deep

The luminaries of the Acne Support Group did not allow their former skin condition to prevent them from enjoying tea together this week at the Basil Street Hotel in London.

Fortunately, as they piled the clotted cream and jam on to their scones and swilled down rich cakes, Dr Tony Chu, a consultant dermatologist at the Hammersmith Hospital, London, reassured the gathering that diet did not cause acne.

That myth is only one of the many surrounding the condition. No link has been proved — it is not made worse by chocolate cake, Cornish cream or fish and chips.

Naturally, a well-balanced, vitamin-rich diet improves a person's general health, and the skin reflects this, but occasionally making a hop of oneself with a box of chocolates does not trigger acne.

The condition can occur at any age. It is seen in babies and octogenarians, and 1 per cent of men and 5 per cent of women over 40 still suffer from significant acne.

It usually starts in adolescence and is more common in men than women, but the latter can suffer from it again in their thirties — and some may develop it for the first time at that age. Although a great plague of adolescence, when the sex drive, especially in males, is strong, it is not caused by too little or too much sex, nor by the type of sexual activity.

And even though it makes the skin look unappealing, it is not the result of a lack of soap and water. The cleanest people may develop blackheads, whiteheads, pustules, mini-abscesses and all the other manifestations of the condition. In fact, overwashing the face can dry the skin and make it sore, and cause the acne to become worse.

If the condition is not the result of diet, dirt or sex, then what does cause it and what makes it worse?

It is related to the response of the skin to the hormone testosterone, which is pro-



Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on acne, alopecia, neck pain and hereditary tremors

increased production of oil and a blocked outlet produces the pustules.

Acne is made worse by sweating, tight clothing such as collars and bras, fringes, some hair oils and suntan lotions, periods and, probably, stress.

It requires treatment, not the unwarranted reassurance that "you'll grow out of it". Some 18 per cent of teenagers being treated for severe acne have experienced suicidal thoughts because of it. Forty per cent avoid school when it is at its worst, and a third say it limits their ability to make friends, particularly with the opposite sex.

Even in adult life, embarrassment, reinforced by problems with employment, is often felt. Two thirds of adults with acne feel depressed, 12 per cent so badly that they have contemplated killing themselves.

If there has not been a 50 per cent improvement within two months of a treatment being instituted, sufferers should be assertive and suggest a change of regime, such as antibiotics or other antibacterials, either applied to the skin or taken by mouth, coupled — and this is *de rigueur* — with skin preparations of retinoids (vitamin A compounds).

Serious cases may need Roaccutane, an oral derivative of vitamin A; however, because of its potential side-effects, it is prescribed only by hospital consultants. Women who are resistant to other forms of treatment may be given Dianette. This, like other oestrogen preparations, can cause blood clots.

The object of treatment is to prevent scars from forming. Once they have, they can never be eradicated, although their appearance may be improved through chemical peeling, laser resurfacing, dermabrasion, and collagen or steroid injections.

● The Acne Support Group, PO Box 230, Hayes, Middlesex UB8 3UT. 0181-561 6868



Beware, you may be dialling up trouble for yourself. Better to buy a headset that allows you to phone without having to bend your neck

Poseurs with a new line in neck pain

Sinuous women used to accentuate their curves by posing elegantly with a cigarette holder. Today the exhibitionist man or woman is more likely to use a telephone wedged between the head and shoulders. Attention-seeking isn't confined to the drawing room but, fear not, the poseur who flashes past on the motorway, telephone in the crook of the neck, may have his or her comeuppance.

Fortunately, their comeuppance will not necessarily be a gory accident; it may be more subtle. They may suffer instead from "mobile telephone users' shoulder droop", "work-related upper limb disorders" or more simply "telephone neck". Each of these terms refers to the same condition: the patient is suffering because he or she has gripped a

telephone for too long and too hard between head and shoulder.

Tense, aching shoulders, painful neck muscles, a headache extending to behind the eyes and pain radiating to between the shoulder blades or around the chest can all result from the head being bent sideways. This movement, lateral bending, is one that puts the greatest strain on the neck and is therefore the most likely to cause pressure damage to the nerve roots that form the plexus of nerves in the neck. Injury to these nerves results in pain in the soft tissues supplied by them.

Heads and necks have evolved in such a way that when they are at full stretch — the posture that Alexander Technique instructors teach, and which Third World women use when carrying loads — they are very

resilient. Bending head and neck sideways to grip a telephone in the developed world is not so kind to them.

A car driver is on record as having done so much damage to the nerves in his neck by telephoning throughout a two-hour drive that the resulting palsy caused him to lose the use of his right arm for a month. In another case, a single 32-minute call was enough to give a French woman persistent neck pain and problems with her hearing. Scans showed that pressure had resulted in nerve damage and interfered with the blood flow through her carotid artery.

Not all the muscle tension is related to nerve damage. Research at the Santa Clara Valley medical centre in California shows that combining telephoning with driving increases

neck and shoulder muscle tone by 41 per cent. Replacing handsets with headsets not only obviates the need to grip the telephone by bending the neck, but improves posture and relaxes back muscles.

Drivers who want to survive, and others who want to read, type or cook while on the telephone need a headset kit to prevent trouble, as well as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory preparations to relieve existing symptoms.

Some companies, such as Plantronics, offer a range of headsets. It recently introduced free-hand cellular headsets for car drivers which have a device on the microphone to cut out extraneous driving noises so that the person phoning can be heard clearly. ● Plantronics: 01793 848999



A turban hides Princess Caroline of Monaco's alopecia in 1996

Stress could be the key to hair loss

AS THE warmer weather arrives the increase in the number of hairs on the pillow is enough to cause concern to even the least concerned. Baldness can be the result of old hair not being replaced, as well as from it falling out prematurely.

General Practitioner magazine has recently reviewed the multitude of conditions that result in hair loss. Most people, women as well as men, must eventually come to terms with so-called "male pattern baldness", the thinning of the hair in old age. Hair loss starts above the forehead and in the temple region to give the typical receding hairline, which is later followed by loss from the crown.

Although older women lose hair in this way, the process is obviously less complete. If the woman is pre-menopausal, hair loss of this type may be hereditary, but she should be investigated for the possibility of adrenal problems, or polycystic ovarian syndrome, which is also associated with a male distribution of hair on the face and abdomen, together with acne.

Hair loss in both sexes can result from iron-deficiency anaemia, a poor general diet or too little thyroid hormone. The review gives considerable prominence to the effects of

stress on hair follicles. Interestingly, hair loss does not occur immediately after the stressful event but about three months later. It itemises various common causes of stress that are particularly likely to affect a previously fine head of hair. Childbirth is such a comparatively common cause of hair loss that it has its own name, post-partum alopecia. Likewise, major surgery, serious accidents or severe infections can expedite baldness, as I know to my cost.

The number of diseases that can cause baldness are legion and range from infected hair follicles to shingles, tertiary syphilis and scleroderma. There are other conditions, too, such as alopecia universalis, in which all the body hair is lost, or alopecia areata, in which the baldness is patchy. Alopecia universalis and areata can be associated with auto-immune disease. Some drugs also cause hair loss, including beta-blockers.

The report written by Dr Aziz Sheikh, a research fellow at Imperial College, London, gives credence to two other frequently quoted reasons for hair loss — emotional stress such as bereavement, and crash dieting. The belief that losing too much weight too fast causes excessive hair loss is apparently true.

When tremors strike

NOT everybody whose outstretched hand has a fine shake and whose teacups rattle in their saucers is accustomed to drinking something rather stronger.

It is bad luck on those people who have benign hereditary tremor, usually known as essential tremor, that the rest of the world wonders if they are secret drinkers, or possibly taking one of the older antidepressant drugs.

Blake Pinnell of Wetherby, West Yorkshire, has written of the difficulties that this condition can cause, and last week there was a conference about essential tremor at the Westminster Central Hall.

Essential tremor is inherited as an autosomal dominant

characteristic in 50 per cent of cases. The shake usually affects one or both hands but sometimes the head, too, and the voice may have a tremulous character to it.

Anything that causes a shake, such as too much coffee, anxiety, tiredness, an overactive thyroid or even some prescription drugs, including steroids, makes an essential tremor worse.

The benzodiazepines, preparations such as Valium, improve the shake, but since it is persistent their regular use is not recommended.

Likewise, alcohol helps, but it is not considered a good reason for sherry at midday. Fortunately, beta-blockers lessen the tremors, as does primidone.

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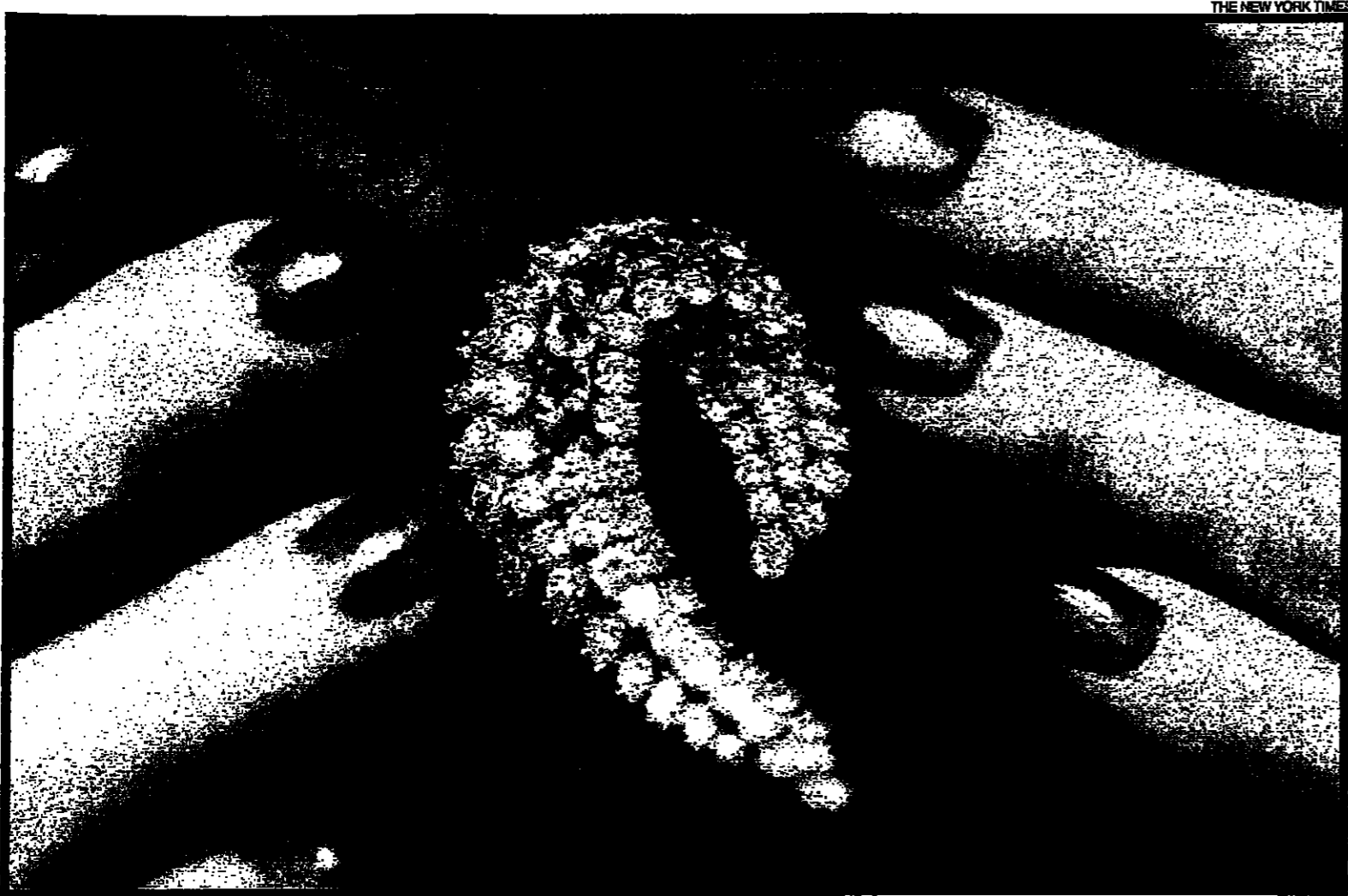
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Fingers on the pulse: the gem-studded Heartthrob Brooch, a unique blend of jewellery and technology, could be yours for just \$500,000

Putting your heartbeat on the Net

Imagine a glittering handful of diamonds and rubies on an arc of platinum. Contemplate the effect as they flash with each beat of your heart. Then consider the ultimate in millennium romance—the ability to transmit your heartbeat on the Internet.

Enter the Heartthrob Brooch, a one-off marriage of romance and technology, complete, like all the most desirable tokens of affection, with a dazzling \$500,000 (£312,500) price tag. Yet, for its creator, a curiously pragmatic soul by the name of Ronald Winston, its fascination lies not so much in the allure of its 78 exquisite diamonds but in the advances it represents for scientific innovation.

"It's a great way to display stones at night," he says. The

Anjana Ahuja on the brooch that flashes with every beat of your heart

piece was first unveiled not at the Oscars or to the very rich and very famous who regularly patronise Harry Winston, the company founded by his late father, but to a select gathering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) during a symposium on wearable technology.

"A model wore the brooch and, as she danced, her heart rate was radioed by the device to a computer and put up on a screen," Mr Winston explains. When Leonard Nimoy, the master of ceremonies—better known as Mr Spock to *Star Trek* fans—embraced her, two heartbeats went on display.

The technical side was developed in tandem with Professor Michael Hawley from MIT. A tiny sensor embedded in the platinum setting of the brooch registers heartbeats, sending out a corresponding radio signal. The signal prompts small lights behind the gemstones to flash. Then, with the addition of a miniature transmitter hidden away in a purse, the wearer's heartbeat can be displayed on the Internet.

The new relationship between jewellery and science does not stop here. "There is no reason why an object cannot perform many functions," says Mr Winston. "This is just the forerunner to many things that could happen in the 21st century." A novel watch is now under development, although it will not command a six-figure sum, and Mr Winston talks excitedly about a ring that can measure blood chemistry.

He is not averse to a publicity stunt—his company sent a fleet of bejewelled Ray-Ban sunglasses to this year's Academy Awards (Sigourney Weaver apparently wore a pair), and last year created a diamond-studded bra with a price tag of \$2 million. The item failed to sell, however, and the jewels have since been reclaimed.

Mr Winston does not believe that the same undistinguished fate awaits the Heartthrob Brooch. "I have been, really quite surprised by the level of interest," he says.

"People seem to be fascinated. It doesn't look weird or anything, and you don't have to switch it on. It is simply a beautiful brooch made from diamonds and rubies."

"But it would take someone with a certain amount of vision to buy it. Jewellery is one of the most conservative areas of fashion—people don't look at the tail of a brooch in the same way they do the hem of a skirt. They are not constantly watching whether they go this way or that."

Rumour has it that someone did express interest in wearing the brooch to the Oscars ceremony, but it was being flown to a prospective buyer at the time. Mr Winston now believes that he is close to selling it.

His wheeze has certainly earned the stunned admiration of his peers. One anonymous purveyor of posh rocks, who labelled the piece "eccentric and amusing", rang back worriedly to ask whether it was an April Fool's joke (it's not). However, the idea of combining aesthetics and technology, at least in the rarefied world of million-dollar gems, is unlikely to be copied.

Garrard, the Crown Jeweller, for one, says it has no plans to produce such ornaments.

"People who spend that kind of money would usually want a piece that would be appropriate for all occasions," muses the company's spokeswoman. "However, we do believe that jewellery should suit someone's personality and style."

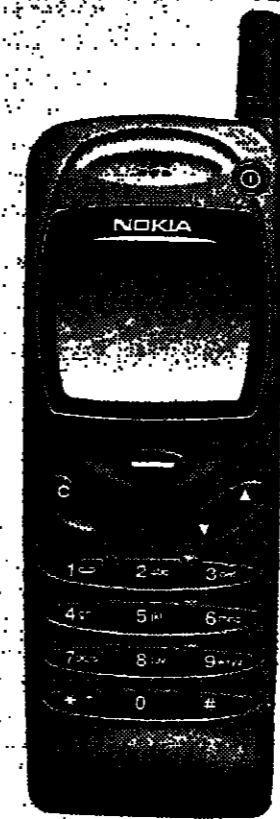
"Whoever bought this would certainly have a very individual, innovative taste. They would be the type of person who wants their jewellery to speak out, to be something out of the norm." Upon which luminary would Mr Winston most like to see the brooch? Rather than celebrated trinket-wearers such as Elizabeth Taylor and Zsa Zsa Gabor, he would choose a female astronaut as custodian of his extraordinary creation. He is even thinking of approaching NASA with the proposal, although he is not sure whether the brooch would actually make it to the final frontier. A tennis starlet would be his second choice, he suggests. "It would be great to see it on somebody beautiful like Martina Hingis while she runs around on court," he sighs.

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An open letter to Sir Richard Eyre

MICHAEL POWELL

Mary Allen, who resigned last week as chief executive of the Royal Opera House, offers her thoughts on how best to marshal the arts to Sir Richard Eyre as he prepares a report on opera and ballet in London

Dear Richard

TODAY I should have been meeting you to talk about your review of the Royal Opera House and English National Opera, before your review group goes away this weekend to wrestle with the issues faced by opera and ballet in London. Although I attended the first meeting of your group, you and I have not had any contact (at least not on this matter) since then. Incidentally, I think it was sensible not to ask those of us directly connected with either the ROH or ENO to participate in the group. It is difficult to be passionately committed to your own vision for your organisation, and at the same time to be sufficiently objective to consider really radical alternatives to the status quo. And if your group is not willing or able to do that, then the exercise will have been a waste of time. Several members of your group have been to see me during the past few weeks. I have had meetings about money, corporate governance, management and structures. But no one has mentioned the word art.

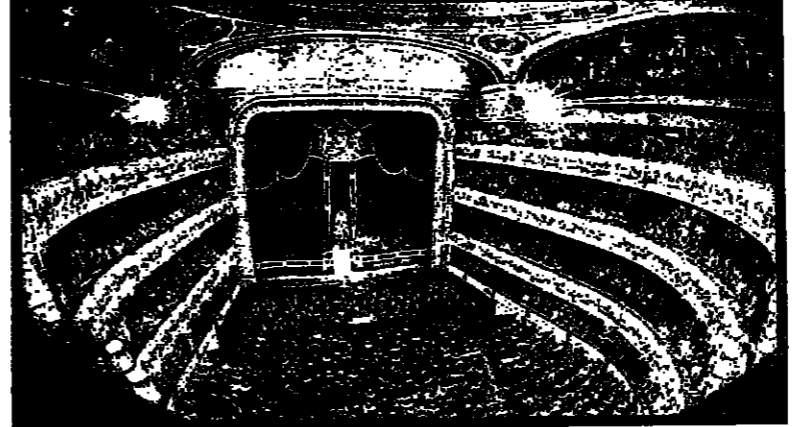
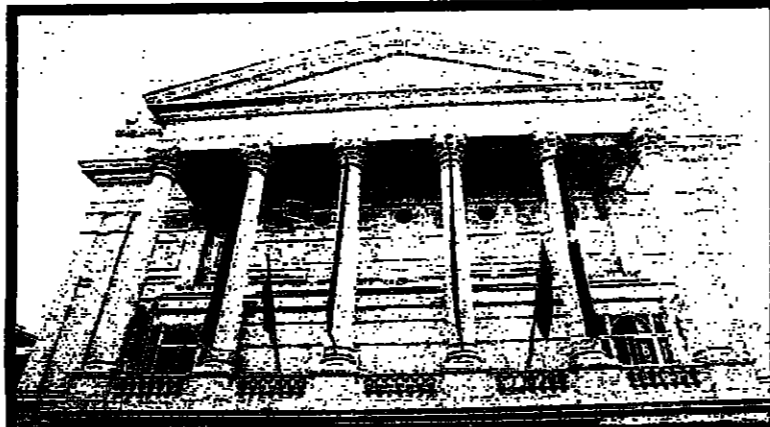
SO ART was the key thing I wanted to talk to you about today. First, most commentators refer to your work as a review of opera provision — well, it's not. The Royal Ballet is one of the greatest companies in the world. Almost throughout its 50-year history at Covent Garden it has been the poor relation, its needs coming second to those of the opera company. I was always told that this was inevitable, because of the different ways in which the two art forms worked. Well, having been the chief executive at the Royal Opera House for six months, I now think this is bunkum. It is a question of attitude and priority on the part of those who run the ROH. Your recommendations must give as much weight to the needs of ballet as to those of opera. The second question relating to art concerns the differences between the two opera companies. There could *should* — be clearly distinctive roles for each, but they have drifted too close together in the past few years. There needs to be a rethink about what constitutes "Englishness" for the ENO. It is not just a question of working in the English language, but of encouraging younger English artists of all kinds: musicians, singers, directors and designers. It is also worth asking whether a younger, national company ought also to be particularly committed to experimentation, or whether part of its role is as a training ground for the international companies. I would like to see a mixture of both. The Royal Opera is an international company of the highest stature and should remain so. This should not mean, however, that it presents only historical work in traditional ways.

EARLY on during my time there, someone described it to me as a "living museum". This understates the role of contemporary composers at the ROH: *Gawain* was one of the greatest artistic events of the decade. I believe it is also important for the ROH to reinvent continually the arts of the past. The Richard Jones *Ring* cycle was an extraordinary intellectual achievement, loathed by some, attracting the fierce support of others — including myself. One of the aspects of Nicholas Payne's work that I most admired was his commitment to the new, the untested and the risky. That should all be part of the role of a major international opera house. Of course, it is much easier to make suggestions about art than to put them into practice. You know the main problem as well as I do: the performing arts are a labour-intensive business. Ensemble-based art forms, such as opera and ballet, mean particularly high fixed costs, which do not sit comfortably with volatile levels of income. If you are to make sense of this equation, you must make some comments about subsidy. The Government is daft if it does not recognise that we cannot continue with the present levels of artistic excel-

lence without some additional investment. The only conclusion I can draw from its insistence to you that no more money will be available is that the Government just does not care about the arts. Sadly, the only thing that might make it care would be a high-profile collapse of an orchestra, theatre or opera company. Although there may not seem to be a popular vote in the arts, priorities change at a time of crisis, as politicians have found whenever an orchestra or theatre in their constituency has looked likely to go bust. But one of the most disgraceful aspects of this Government's apathy is the way in which such a highly trained human resource is being wasted. Having observed three great performing companies — ballet, opera and orchestra — at close quarters for the past six months, their dedication and skill borders on the unique. It is already becoming difficult to retain performers of that calibre in a country that regards them with such apparent indifference. So, what to do? I believe there are two ways forward. One is to find a radical option. There have been several rumours about splitting the companies from the theatres; about privatising the theatres; and about bringing the theatres under a single administrative management structure. The best idea I have heard is to recognise that we have three lyric companies and three lyric theatres, and to match them up. Allow English National Opera to return to the rebuilt Sadler's Wells. The company would be returning to its roots, and the younger English voices would be working with more sympathetic acoustics rather than having



Mary Allen: "Artists should not be asked to deal with financial and political demands; their talents are better used in producing the best possible opera and ballet"



The ins and outs of Covent Garden: the Royal Opera House is where people want to see the Royal Opera perform

INSIDE SECTION 2
Rodney Milnes on new opera productions
Arts, pages 36-39



Sir Richard Eyre "will need, and deserves, good luck"

companies and a receiving house, or whether to become a single integrated organisation. The former option would be easier to manage but more costly to run. In addition to being more cost-effective, the integrated option is far more exciting artistically and would mean that the whole organisation — artists and managers alike — would be committed to greater accessibility for as many people as possible.

YOU MIGHT want to think about how the organisation should be led. Running the ROH is an immensely complex business, partly because it is underfunded and there are so many different (mostly financial and political) demands to be met. Artists should not be asked to deal with these: their talents are better used in producing the best possible opera and ballet. An operatic supreme, running the opera company as well as the overall operation, will inevitably have a bias towards opera, to ballet's disadvantage. That is why the answer lies in a chief executive with a knowledge of both art forms, and whose main skill is in management and administration.

He or she will know how to harness a range of views on how opera and ballet should develop, and to encourage artistic excellence within the resources that are available. Most important, he or she will ensure that the resources of the ROH will be shared equally between opera and ballet. When I was appointed, an opera critic whom I have not met but whose writing I admire wrote me an open letter. He ended it by saying: "Oh, and good luck, Mary Allen, you're going to need it." To succeed in the task you have been given will require rather more luck than I had! You deserve it, and I hope you get it.

to battle against that vast Coliseum auditorium. Suggest that the Royal Ballet becomes resident at the Coliseum, with its superb stage for dance, and forms the core of a National Dance House. The Royal Ballet could be joined there by English National Ballet and Rambert Dance, and the programme could include international companies. The Royal Ballet would be only minutes away from the new studios created for them in the Royal Opera House complex. And leave the Royal Opera at the Royal Opera House. As the closure programme has shown, that is where people want to hear it. But if you are not going down the radical route — and don't be discouraged by the resistance to previous attempts to make distinctive shifts to artistic provision in London — the only sensible alternative is to strengthen what is already there. English National Opera can speak for itself. I would like to see the Royal Opera House. It is a magnificent organisation: I have observed it for five years and participated in it directly for a little over six months. It has made mistakes, certainly,

you

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A clear voice from above the parapet

Magnus Linklater on why Dewar could do with a man like Campbell

First, let us dispose of Sir Bernard Ingham. He is wheeled out these days as the trenchant, no-nonsense, wouldn't-have-happened-in-my-day voice of good sense and straight dealing. He attacks Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, for criticising ministers, describing it as a disgraceful abuse of power by an unselected official. He claims that if he, Sir Bernard, had dared to do the same during his time at Downing Street, he would have been fired. "If these ministers had the guts they would stand up to Mr Campbell and slap him down," he booms.

This is humbug of a very high order. Not only did Sir Bernard, in his day, do much the same — excoriating Margaret Thatcher's ministers when they stepped out of line — he did it in a thoroughly underhand way. There was not much Yorkshire bluntness about the way he used to shelter behind the anonymity of the Downing Street lobby system, while ridiculing, for instance, Francis Pym, Leader of the House, after he had made a rather gloomy speech about the economy. Mr Pym, we assumed, was not long for this Cabinet. We were right.

Tony Blair's press secretary need take no lessons in protocol from Sir Bernard. This, after all, is the man who leapt on a junior colleague to leak a memo from the Solicitor-General of the Westland scandal in 1986, so that he would not have to do it himself — an action later condemned as a flagrant violation of the rules. At least Mr Campbell does what he does in the full glare of publicity. And no one doubts that when he does it, he is echoing the views of his Prime Minister.

The fact is that he, like Sir Bernard in his day, reflects the character and policies of his boss. But unlike Sir Bernard, he is up on the parapet to catch the flak as well. Mr Campbell can turn on his critics, rough them up, complain and pontificate, using the jargon of the saloon bar rather than the coded language of the Cabinet room — and get away with it. Since those to whom he talks are, like him, journalists by trade, they understand the language he speaks, and the terms of engagement under which they all operate. Mr Campbell it is who conjures a good headline out of an anodyne statement, steers them towards a promising angle, fills in the space between the lines of his leader's speech. Like God, he has all the best stories.

Whether the reporters buy the line is, of course, up to them, but at least it is clear. In these days of 24-hour, global, news coverage, the spin-doctor has become an integral part of government as ministers, and without him, politics can be uphill work — as Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, is beginning to discover. He has no equivalent of Mr Campbell, and has taken some pride in speaking for himself, trusting that the message he

At least Campbell acts in the full glare of publicity

has to convey is so well in tune with the mood of the public, that there is no need for an intermediary. His advisers are there to give background briefings, but not noticeably to bolster his image.

Buoyed up by his massive election victory and the triumph of the devolution referendum, Mr Dewar assumed that the run-up to a Scottish parliament would be plain sailing. He was wrong. A series of small but irritating public blunders, divisions within the party, and a few minor U-turns have given an impression of vacillation. A once friendly media have turned nasty. Unlike the London press, where Mr Blair still enjoys strong support and can count on favourable coverage for the big policy announcements, Scottish newspapers are now almost universally critical. As a result, and within just a year of taking office, Labour finds itself hard-pressed by the Scottish Nationalists, who have closed to within a few points in the opinion polls.

And yet, there has been no fundamental change of policy. The big promises on Scottish autonomy have been more than fulfilled in the Scotland Bill, currently moving smoothly through Parliament. On health, education, employment, Scotland is performing no worse than elsewhere. One can detect no obvious "feel-good" factor.

Yet already commentators are beginning to predict that such is the swing of public opinion, Labour's worst nightmare could be realised, and dissatisfaction could push Scotland over the brink to independence within a decade.

All this may settle back again, but only if the message is clarified, and Labour begins to get its act together again. At the moment, there is no obvious sign of that happening — indeed if anything the omens are looking bleak. The Editor of *The Scotsman*, who has been conspicuously hostile to the Dewar administration, is moving to the *Daily Record*, Scotland's largest circulation paper and once solidly pro-Labour. BBC Scotland, which has been relatively supportive, has been openly accused of pro-Labour bias and will now presumably seek to redress the balance.

All this would be meat and drink to Mr Campbell or his equivalent — it is natural spin-doctor territory. If government policy is to be given a fair wind in the teeth of media hostility, then a bare-knuckle fighter, in the shape of a high-profile press secretary, might be just what is needed. Perhaps if Mr Campbell is otherwise engaged, Sir Bernard might be persuaded out of retirement. It was, after all, he who once defended his trade by saying: "If by news management you mean I seek to present the case for the policies and measures of the Government I serve, as effectively as possible, I plead guilty a thousand, nay 10,000 times."



REBRANDING BRITAIN

Spin over substance

The gap between public relations and Britain's reality has become absurd

Who is going to butter our parsnips? Not this Government. This week the contrast between public relations and reality has become ludicrous. It is the week in which Britain has lost Rolls-Royce cars, one of the greatest of our national brand names. Not much cause for self-congratulation there, one might think. It is also the week in which 25 trendy personalities, including the man who resprayed the tail fins of British Airways' aircraft to make them look like the 1960s wine labels for Chateau Mouton Rothschild, have been established as Panel 2000 to rebrand Britain into "Cool Britannia". Cool Britannia is certainly not going to be riding in a Rolls-Royce.

It has also been the week when the Downing Street press officer, still only a minor figure in world history, was discovered addressing a Secretary of State in peremptory terms which would have been offensive if used to an office boy. Who does this man Campbell think he is? All he seems to be good at is *suppresso veri* and *suggestio falsi*. He has his *suppresso veri* hat, in which he is the Government's chief information officer, or has some grand title, and his *suggestio falsi* hat, in which he is the chief press spokesman for the Labour Party. We are told that he is important because the Prime Minister would rather talk to him than to his ministers. Considering the senior ministers include such loyal friends as Robin Cook, that is understandable. But it is not government.

Auberon Waugh, who has a good eye for the absurd, has discovered a recent statement by the Prime Minister which summarises some of what is going wrong. I had missed it, though I have subsequently read the whole article. Last Sunday the Prime Minister was discussing an urgent problem of state: what on earth is to go into the Millennium Dome? A good question. He wrote: "We are forging a new patriotism focused on the potential we can fulfil in the future... it is about being modern and forward-thinking and believing in the future."

One can turn these phrases over and over in one's mind, with ever increasing joy; they have a surreal lack of meaning. Did any man ever write, or allow some underling to write for him, so preposterous a series of gaseous vapourities? "Patriotism," as Nurse Edith Cavell said, "is not enough." The Prime Minister

agrees. Patriotism is rather old hat; devoting one's life to the service of one's country sounds positively Victorian.

So in place of patriotism we must be given something else. What is it to be? We are a "new Labour" Government; we are governing a "new Britain"; we have a "new monarchy". We should have "new patriotism". What is this "new patriotism" to be? It must be based on something, some ideal. "A new patriotism for a new Britain," perhaps that would do? But we ought to take it a bit further than that. There is always the future.

New Labour believes in the future, whether or not the future will believe in new Labour. The past is full of horrible things like trade unions, socialism and hereditary peers, all of which new Labour is against. Down with the past.

Yet the future could itself be a bit dangerous, because we do not yet know exactly what is going to happen. So perhaps it would be safer to write, "the potential of the future". "Focus" is also a good word; we have had all these focus groups who tell us what our policy ought to be. So the sentence emerges from the collective subconscious of the new Labour apparatus. "We are forging a new patriotism focused on the potential we can fulfil in the future." Alastair Campbell had the right word for it. This is the higher "C.R.A.P.". This is what it means to be "modern and forward-thinking and believing in the future".

Policy, of course, is another matter. In opposition, policy was quite easy. All new Labour had to do was to find out what people wanted and promise to give it to them. The basic promise was to reform the Health Service, welfare state, and do all that without putting up taxes. That is Labour's contract with Britain. Direct tax rates have not been raised, though other taxes have been; otherwise the contract has been largely a succession of non-events. The Health Service waiting lists are longer, not shorter. The

William Rees-Mogg

last Budget was one of those which was appraised at the time and forgotten a week later. Gordon Brown emasculated Frank Field's welfare proposals, which emerged as pious platitudes not as the great reform that was promised.

One of these non-events was even labelled a non-event by the Chancellor himself. The big economic policy decision last Tuesday was Gordon Brown's statement to the Treasury Select Committee that he was not going to do anything about the "soaraway" pound. The pound is at its highest level for ten years. So far

as export manufacturers are concerned that is far too high. The Bavarian company BMW owns Rover and is buying Rolls-Royce — though Volkswagen may still put in another bid. Rover has just announced a £92 million loss, made before the latest rise in the pound. The Rover Chairman, Dr Walter Hasselkus, said in Munich on Tuesday: "The British Government does not appreciate the problems with the pound. They say the export industry is in good shape. They have not the foggiest idea of the scale of the problem. It is not impossible to contemplate Rovers being built abroad. It would be Germany or the USA." That is not good news for new Britain.

The greatest mistake the Thatcher administration made was to allow the pound to rise to non-competitive levels during the early 1980s. That devastated large areas of British manufacturing industry, which have never recovered. Now we are again airing the argument that the squeeze on manufacturing can be offset by the prosperity of the service sector. The Labour Party used to attack that view: Harold Wilson used to talk of the "candy floss economy". Manufacturing generates export; without these export earnings, domestic service businesses will not prosper in the long run. A manufacturing recession, such as Dr Hasselkus is forecasting, will only mean higher unemployment.

Labour's constitutional reforms

have more substance to them, but they too are looking troublesome. Perhaps the House of Lords is not an electoral issue, but the quango House which seems to be proposed will, if anything, be less satisfactory than the hereditary one. The Welsh Assembly will be neither here nor there, though it will be located in Cardiff. The Scottish voters, including half of Scotland's remaining Tories, seem already to be convinced that devolution is a halfway house to independence, which is what John Major always said it would be.

Even Europe is not looking good for new Labour. Perhaps if Gordon Brown had had his way, Britain would have voted to enter the single currency in our post-election mood. Taken quickly that might have worked. But now it is impossible. To join the single currency at over DM3 to the pound would be industrial suicide for Britain, as Dr Hasselkus could tell us. For the present that option is gone.

The opinion polls still suggest that Tony Blair's Government is a stunning success; that is indeed the mood of the country as the Government passes the breakwater and moves out of the harbour into the open sea. Yet there is no political situation more dangerous than the first impact of reality on exaggerated expectations.

In May of last year, the electorate was thoroughly tired of the Tories and was attracted by Labour, by Tony Blair's pleasant personality, and his skilfully crafted policies, which amounted to new benefits without new costs. Now the real policy issues are having to be faced, in Scotland, in Europe, in economic and currency policy, in health, in welfare.

Many governments go through this painful shock; some recover. The Clinton Administration suffered a devastating defeat in the mid-term elections of 1994, and still recovered to win re-election in 1996. Yet Labour must move out of the mode of opposition and into that of government. Britain is passed the point at which it is the adhesives which count. "New", "modern", "forward-thinking" now do more harm than good. The Millennium Dome itself is a disastrous symbol of the tendency to prefer shadow to substance. What matters from now on will be good policies, good ministers, good results. The game has changed, and the Government has to change with it.

I firmly believe this is how Nato sees itself — as an alliance of solidarity of those with common values. It would be quite difficult to imagine somebody respecting human rights and freedom only in his or her own country. Openness and the principle of solidarity belong to the very substance of Nato and, as such, they are rooted in the text of the Washington Treaty that opened the door to the alliance's expansion.

Nato membership is not mere security protection, the price of which is a sad obligation to be ready to protect another country in return for its readiness to protect us. For me, Nato is an expression of spirit, the spirit of love for freedom, of solidarity, of the will to protect our common cultural wealth, the spirit of alliance that is not opportunistic but emphatically moral.

I believe it would be contrary to the spirit of this alliance, and to the principle of its openness, to content with our own invitation, we forgot about those who have not been invited. Commonsense tells us that all Nato candidate countries cannot be accepted simultaneously; that would probably cause the alliance's collapse. Still, Nato is open to all closed to any country for this or that tactical reason. Romania and Slovenia's turn will come. So, too, the three Baltic states. And other European countries, even Ukraine, might one day seek membership.

This can happen only if the process of enlargement and transformation goes hand in hand with strengthening a partnership with the Russian Federation. Eighteen years ago Poland introduced the word solidarity with a capital "S" into the history of the 20th century. Today, Nato's core must also be Solidarity.

Big Issue Foundation on Tuesday night. Told she would have to join the large queue "like everyone else" she said she couldn't be bothered to wait, and flounced off. Wise. She might not have enjoyed that sickly cocktail (pop and politics). Cocker ventured: "I'm doing the Government's job for it by raising money for the homeless." I look forward to Mr Cocker inviting the homeless to live with him, like my friend Mr Prescott at Admiralty Arch.

JASPER GERARD

Putting poetry in motion

Vaclav Havel on an alliance built on solidarity

We have come a long way from those poetic, buoyant, and euphoric days that followed communism's fall: those days of new liberties and enormous hopes. Eight years later, the enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and solidarity have long vanished — at least in my country. We now live in a harsh reality, when the vices engraved by decades of communism have surfaced, and we are often unable to deal with them.

These changes do not mean everything is returning to the old tracks. On the contrary, what was once a beautiful dream — which we naively expected to become reality overnight — beginning to materialise, despite the difficulties. The process is no longer perceived as a miracle, but accepted as a matter of course.

In those years when we "dissidents" resisted totalitarian rule, we all probably agreed that one objective was dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, that instrument of Soviet imperial power. We were less clear about what new type of European collective security should be created. Many perceived Nato as a kind of Warsaw Pact twin, established so that the democracies could protect themselves against the spread of Communist power, a twin that would lose its raison d'être once the adversary disappeared. A new pan-European security alliance was conceived as a replacement, with the more naive among us believing that, in the new democratic era, security alliances no longer mattered.

Gradually, reason prevailed. Nato needed to change if it was not to become a ridiculous club of Cold War veterans. Incorporating the new democracies would make Nato a pan-European instrument of collective defence. Europe would face the prospect of life in peace, security and freedom.

But Poland, Hungary, and my own Czech Republic, the first three post-Communist countries to join the alliance, can be useful members only if important defence system changes are implemented. Our security and armed forces laws must meet Nato standards. Our commanders must be trained differently, our armed forces restructured, and our armaments gradually modernised.

All this will be costly, but less so than an isolated defence, an isolation doomed to fail. These issues are now the subject of daily political discussion. Still, I believe they are not the most vital ones we face.

The term alliance can mean two or more countries joining forces to face a potential enemy more efficiently: or to invade and gain control over some other country. The structure of such an alliance is principally closed — it is a structure in which power is more important than value. Such alliances can be composed of countries with very different political systems; they are not allied by shared values, but by their interest in maintaining or strengthening their power for their own protection, or worse, for expansion.

An alliance such as Nato is and must be different. It must be an alliance designed to protect shared values — for human rights, the rule of law, democracy, freedom of expression and a market economy. It is an alliance designed to protect not only national sovereignty or geopolitical interests, but to protect certain kinds of human culture and civilisation. The principal bond of such an alliance is solidarity.

I firmly believe this is how Nato sees itself — as an alliance of solidarity of those with common values. It would be quite difficult to imagine somebody respecting human rights and freedom only in his or her own country. Openness and the principle of solidarity belong to the very substance of Nato and, as such, they are rooted in the text of the Washington Treaty that opened the door to the alliance's expansion.

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Vaclav Havel is the Czech President.

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JASPER GERARD

Ball bounced

ZOE BALL, the screechy disc jockey (pictured), has been rebuffed. She shimmered, ticketless, to London's Blue Note, a trendy spot of nightspot, to watch Jarvis Cocker (pop icon) spin disks in aid of the

JASPER GERARD

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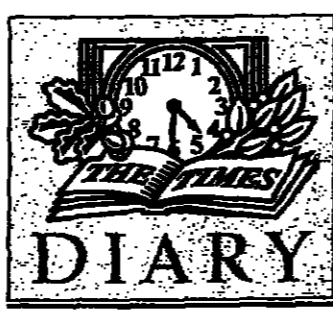
Bye-bye babes

THE Medieval Babes, a coven of musical witches who perform ancient *capella* works, have been banished by John Prescott from a meeting of international ministers. The Babes, a dozen London girls dressed in fetching white outfits and instructed by the marketing men to sing in Latin, were due to perform for G8 environment ministers this weekend — until word of their eventual backgrounds reached the deputy PM. After his drenching by the anarchic pop group The Turbans, he has plumped for jazz instead.

The ministers will meet in the tranquil setting of Leeds Castle in Kent, and will be treated to a Prescott-hosted party on Saturday. The chanteuses were chosen as the face of modern British music (perverse, really, since they specialise in 13th-century choral songs). But then their CVs arrived: the band's official publicity describes one singer, Marie, as "a convicted drug-dealer who lives with a sperm donor in North London", while their leader, Katherine, doubles apparently as a stripper in East End pubs. Others include a drama student, a model, a comedy writer, a designer and a

Belgian nanny. All claim to have used witchcraft. Their slinky white dresses and stockings thighs were perfect for the new, sexed-up dumbed-down classical music world of Vanessa Mae and Linda Brava. But Prescott, sensitive moralist and aesthete, deemed it *de trop*. Angela Merkel, a prominent German Green, might agree.

The Babes have been told that Prescott does not think they are "suitable", and the National Jazz Youth Orchestra will play instead. "The Babes were just one of the many options we were considering," says a Prescott aide. "He has



always been a bit of a jazz man." Very Cool Britannia.

THE difficulty of dealing with Americans. Sir Elton John and Sir Tim Rice are bashing out a musical, with the help of £10 million from Disney. The British

tunesmiths have penned a unique version of Verdi's *Aida*, the tale of an Egyptian general's doomed love for his Ethiopian slave. Michael Eisner, head of Disney, rejected the title as *Aida* was "too gloomy and hard for Americans to pronounce". The show opens in September, under the uplifting name *Elaborate Lives*. Sounds Mickey Mouse to me.

Dispiriting...

WANTED: plutocrats with faith. The Millennium Dome is to make a desperate cash appeal for the Spirit Level, the religious display in the Greenwich jamboree. The challenging task of finding spiritu-



Making mischief: some of the Medieval Babes banished by John Prescott from his castle bash

سكنى الألو

هكذا من الاصل



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

A ROCKY SUMMIT

Europe has a direct stake in Asia's recovery

The Europe-Asian dialogue was inaugurated two years ago in booming Bangkok...

Support role of TA essential to Army

From Mr Julian Brazier, MP for Canterbury (Conservative)

Sir, Your leading article on the Territorial Army ("Awkward squad", March 26)...

'Malaise' in British football culture

From Mr Hayden Middleton

Sir, I cannot draw the same conclusions as Keith Blackmore (article "Football with the facts", March 31)...

Dismay at the sale of Rolls-Royce

From Mr Stephen Davis

Sir, I trust that the British Government and in particular the MoD will remember the priorities of Vickers in the disposal of Rolls-Royce...

BEYOND OUR KEN

Blair should relax about Livingstone's chances

The contest for the elected Mayor of London looks set to stir up a nest of internal contradictions at the heart of Tony Blair's administration...

Commons traditions

From Sir Carol Mather

Sir, I refer to your Political Correspondent's comments on the State Opening of Parliament [report, "Parliament's pomp spared reform", March 30]...

Future of museums

From the Chairman of the Museums and Galleries Commission

Sir, The Royal Academy exhibition Art Treasures of England (review, January 20) is a celebration of the richness and variety of museums and galleries throughout England...

CPS in a spin?

From the Head of Communications, Crown Prosecution Service

Sir, I take issue with Frances Gibbs' interpretation of our reasons for instructing internal communications consultants (report, "DPP under fire hires defender", March 31)...

Indian 'dancing bears'

From Colonel Charles H. Wilson (ret'd)

Sir, It was pleasing to read Mrs Denise Hirst's plea on behalf of Indian "dancing bears" (letter, March 26)...

Mirsky riposte

From Dr Jonathan Mirsky

Sir, Brian MacArthur, wrote (Paper Round, Media, March 27) that "an innate sense of decency at the top of the paper" prevented a reply to my observations on the China coverage of The Times...

RUSH TO JUDGMENT

The Russell case is neither settled nor simple

The crime was so cruel and the compensation seems so callous. It was therefore understandable that national sympathy reached out to Josie Russell in the light of the £18,500 awarded by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)...

Diplomatic language

From Mr Bernard Kaukas

Sir, As regards the facility of the English to speak French (letters, March 27), according to H. Crabbe-Robinson's diary entry for December 15, 1896, Prince Metemrich said to Lord Dudley: "You are the only Englishman I know who speaks good French..."

Mirsky riposte

From Dr Jonathan Mirsky

Sir, Brian MacArthur, wrote (Paper Round, Media, March 27) that "an innate sense of decency at the top of the paper" prevented a reply to my observations on the China coverage of The Times...

Payment of doctors

From Mr Dennis Wynes

Sir, Dr I. A. McCoubrey (letter, March 30) mentions the old Chinese practice of paying doctors a retainer. As I understand the current system we already pay GPs a fixed sum per patient on their list, so we are halfway there.

In the pink

From Mr Brian Parker

Sir, Your description of the shrivelled and pitted body of the Ice Man of Otzal (report and photograph, March 30) as being "perfectly preserved" gives me enormous encouragement when I see myself in my shower-room mirror.

حکومت اسلامی

STER OBITUARIES

GENERAL SIR FRANK KING

General Sir Frank King, GCB, MBE, GOC and Director of Operations Northern Ireland, 1973-75, died on March 30 aged 79. He was born on March 9, 1919.



Frank King was regarded by many as the best and most successful Director of Operations in Northern Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s. He took over early in 1973 when the unrest was at its peak with the statistics for violence standing at an annual rate of some 12,000 bombings and shooting incidents. When he left three years later at the end of 1975 it had been divided by six and was down to just over 2,000.

His sense was nicely balanced with technical awareness. This made him an ideal choice as a policy-maker in the weapons field. He enhanced these qualifications by becoming a qualified pilot as well. His postwar service at regimental level was almost entirely with the 16th Parachute Brigade as a company commander, general staff officer, second-in-command of 1 Para, and then after a short spell away as Assistant Military Secretary in the War Office, command of 2 Para from 1960 to 1962 in Cyprus and Bahrain, and during the British intervention in Kuwait. After commanding the 11th Infantry Brigade at Minden in 1963 he became Military Adviser (Overseas Equipment) in the Ministry of Defence in 1965.

BELLA ABZUG

Bella Abzug, American feminist and anti-war activist, died in New York on March 31 aged 77. She was born in the Bronx on July 24, 1920.



Bella Abzug was a tireless feminist, politician and champion of the underdog, yet her raspy, booming voice often garnered as much attention as her tireless activism. Over the course of her career it was compared both to cut glass and gravel, while Norman Mailer once suggested that the Abzug larynx could boil the fat off a taxi driver's neck. Various descriptions as a prizefighter, a man-hater and a Jewish mother with more complaints than Portnoy. Bella Abzug stood at the front-line of American feminism in the 1970s and never retreated. "Women have been trained to speak softly and carry a big stick," she said. "Those days are over."

student council, and at Columbia University, where she received her law degree. During the Second World War Abzug worked in a shipyard and after the war worked as a labour lawyer and counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union. She was the chief lawyer in the Mississippi appeal of Willie McGee, a young black man accused of raping a white woman. Abzug, who was pregnant at the time, argued the case in Mississippi while white supremacist groups threatened her life. McGee was executed in 1951. In the 1950s Abzug also began defending those accused by being communists by the Senator Joseph McCarthy, and in 1961, when the US resumed nuclear testing, Abzug was a founder of Women's Strike for Peace. She was elected to Congress in 1970 aged 50, the first Jewish woman in the House of Representatives. On her first day on the job, wasting no time, Abzug successfully introduced a resolution to withdraw all US soldiers from Indo-China. She went on to draft Bills intended to prevent sex discrimination and to promote gay rights, and she invoked a little-known procedural tactic that forced the Nixon Administration to surrender the Pentagon Papers. Abzug was also the first member of Congress to call for Richard Nixon's impeachment during Watergate. After leaving the House in 1977 to run unsuccessfully against Pat Moynihan for the Senate nomination, Abzug worked for women's rights for more than two decades, founding the International Women's Environmental and Development Organisation. She was president of the Women's Foreign Policy Council and chaired the National Women's Political Caucus. In 1995, though confined to a wheelchair, she was a key player in Beijing at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Abzug never appeared in public without a wide brimmed hat, a practice that began when she was a young lawyer. She said that clients at that time always mistook her for a secretary, and she donned a hat because in the 1950s it signalled she was a professional working woman. She married a stockbroker, Martin Abzug in 1944. He died in 1986. She is survived by two daughters and a sister.

KATE CRUISE O'BRIEN

Kate Cruise O'Brien, writer and publisher's editor, died on March 26 aged 49, after suffering a brain haemorrhage. She was born in Dublin on June 25, 1948.



Kate Cruise O'Brien's first story was published in 1971 when she was only 22. It won a literary award in Ireland, as did a collection entitled *A Gift Horse* published seven years later. Sean O'Faolain, one of the great exponents of that literary form in this century, remarked at that time that her work had "the seed of genius". It was a seed destined to grow more in the works of others, as she eventually found her real métier as a publisher's editor. Katherine Alexander Cruise O'Brien was the youngest of three children born to the marriage of Conor Cruise O'Brien, then a young Irish diplomat, and his wife Christina Foster, who belonged to a liberal Protestant family from Ulster. Although both O'Brien and his wife were agnostics, they had their children baptised in the Church of Rome, from which O'Brien was long lapsed. However, they were not reared as Catholics. Kate was educated at Park House, a superior Protestant school in Dublin where she felt she was looked down upon because she was regarded as a Catholic. She was there in 1960 when her father was sent by the United Nations to the newly independent Congo and subjected to a campaign of vilification by some British newspapers, who regarded his actions there as inimical to British interests. To discredit him they focused on the presence in the Congo of his mistress (whom he was later to marry), and their journalists accused Kate on her way to school in an unsuccessful effort to get her to denounce her father for leaving her mother. Although O'Brien's divorce from his first wife was relatively amicable, it affected Kate deeply. She did not do well in school. When, at the age of 17, she spent a year at New York University, where her father was then a professor, she developed anorexia. She remained for most of her adult life a somewhat troubled figure, prone to bouts of depression and haunted by a sense of failure. She read English at Trinity College Dublin, where she met her husband Joseph Kearney, whom she married in 1971. She failed to find employment as a teacher after she graduated. She ran a crèche while she worked on her short stories. During the 1980s she wrote a weekly column for the *Irish Independent*. Her novel *The Homestead Garden*, published in 1991, was praised for its elegance and clarity. Like many of her short stories, it was told from the perspective of a troubled sensitive girl with an eccentric family back-

ground and reflected the pain of her own early life. In 1993 she joined a small Dublin publishing house called the Poolbeg Press. It was her first full-time job. Fortright and enthusiastic, she proved an inspiring editor. Involvement with the work of others brought her a contentment that had evaded her as a writer rehearsing the pain of her own childhood. She became noticeably less acerbic. "The older I get," she said in a recent interview, "the happier I get." As a writer she shied away from undue identification with her father. "I have a mother too," she would say. Her relationship with her father had been one of respect rather than closeness. However, the prospect of losing him after he suffered a stroke a few years ago alarmed her, and she made many unsuccessful efforts to persuade him to retire from public controversy. He was at her bedside when she died. She is survived by her husband, her son Alexander, who is a student at Trinity College Dublin, and by both her parents.

E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

E.M.S. Namboodiripad, leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), died in Thiruvananthapuram on March 19 aged 89. He was born in Elamkulam, Kerala, on June 14, 1909.



Patriarch and ideologue of the Indian communist movement for over four decades, E.M.S. Namboodiripad will chiefly be remembered for presiding over the transformation of a once radical Left into a social-democratic entity, more firmly wedded to responsible constitutionalism than to any romantic ideal of revolution. It is largely due to him that Communists today form the third largest bloc in India's parliament and have begun to play a key role in government formation at the national level. Elamkulam Manak Sankaran Namboodiripad, "EMS" as he was always known, was born into a wealthy family of Namboodiris, an intensely conservative Brahmin community in Kerala. As a teenager he rebelled against the orthodoxy of his community and joined the Yogakshema Sabha, an organisation devoted to fighting obscurantist ideas. He was particularly active in the campaign against bigamy - which was common among the Namboodiris - and the ban on widow remarriage. After high school, EMS enrolled for a BA in history at St Thomas College, Trichur. There, he was soon caught up in the maelstrom of nationalist politics. In 1929 the Congress gave the call for *purna swaraj*, or complete independence. EMS plunged into the civil disobedience movement, quitting college in 1932. The same year, he was sent to jail. In 1934 he joined the Congress and quickly rose to become general secretary of its Kerala committee. At the same time, he joined hands with

Jayaprakash Narayan to found the Congress Socialist Party. Although EMS was a member of the All-India Congress Committee and served in the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1939-40, he became disenchanted with Gandhi's refusal to countenance a more militant struggle against the Raj. Along with A.K. Gopalan and P. Krishna Pillai, both prominent Kerala Marxists, he founded the first communist organisation in the province. In 1940 he sold his share of the family's ancestral property and donated the considerable proceeds to the CPI. For the rest of his life, he lived on the meagre salary of a full-time party worker. Namboodiripad's rise in the Communist Party of India was swift. He was not much of an orator: he was soft-spoken and stammered. His strength, however, was his agitprop-style journalism. By 1943 he had become a member of the party's central committee and in 1950 was elected to the politburo. EMS went underground when the CPI was banned following its call for an armed uprising against the post-independence Nehru Government. Armed struggle was eventually called off and the party participated in the 1952 elections, emerging as the main opposition to the Congress. The advent of Khrushchev saw a further mellowing of the CPI's line, and in the 1957 election the party managed to form a coalition government in Kerala. As chief minister, EMS tried to implement land reforms and democratise the education system, but a backlash from landed elements and the Church (Kerala has a large Christian population) led to violence which Nehru, in 1959, used as an excuse to dismiss his administration. Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, was one of the main advocates of this move, widely seen at the time as a violation of the spirit of the constitution. Not without a sense of humour, EMS would later joke about the double irony of the world's first democratically elected communist government being removed from power by undemocratic means. As *The Times of India* noted in an editorial: "Historians will be hard put to decide whether he should be classified as a Brahmin in the best sense of the word - an intellectual colossus and standard bearer of an ideology unoppressed by the unrelenting assault of mightier forces - or a Bolshevik par excellence, who eschewed the crudities of revolutionary socialism to occupy forever a moral high ground." He is survived by his wife, Arya Anitharjanam, and by two sons and two daughters.

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FUNERAL OF FATHER STANTON. ON THIS DAY April 2, 1913 THE PROCESSION THROUGH THE STREETS. Rarely have the people of London seen on successive days more striking funeral processions than they have this week...

NEWS

Lottery watchdog overhauled

The National Lottery is to undergo the most radical overhaul in its three-year history amid moves to clean up its image and restore public confidence in the game. The Government revealed yesterday that it is scrapping the one-man post of lottery watchdog, two months after sacking Peter Davis, the former director-general of Oflot—the Office of the National Lottery. His job will be replaced with a five-member National Lottery Commission... Page 1

Mardi Gra suspect is arrested

Anti-terrorist detectives investigating the Mardi Gra bomber were last night questioning a man arrested after a suspicious package was left near a Sainsbury's store in Ruislip, west London... Page 1

Kray verdict

Reggie Kray, the gangland killer, has lost his bid to be freed from prison after serving 30 years for the murder of Jack "the Hat" McVitie. The Parole Board rejected his case... Page 1

Automatic pilot

Captain John Hackett demonstrated yesterday the calm nerve that saved the Leeds United soccer team. His emergency landing of a burning plane was just part of his job, he said... Page 9

Union battle

Tony Blair prepared the ground for a compromise in the battle over union recognition yesterday amid indications that he faces a new confrontation over workers' rights... Page 2

Charity unchecked

Fraud and maladministration among Britain's 184,000 registered charities is unchecked because of complacency and bad management at the Charity Commission... Page 12

Adultery scandal

The woman at the centre of a Ministry of Defence adultery scandal told a court martial that she saw no reason to be unfriendly towards a man because he was married... Page 3

Stalin papers

President Yeltsin has ordered that classified documents from the Stalin era, including handwritten notes by the Soviet dictator, should be made public for the first time... Page 16

Prison malady

More than half the prison officers at Wormwood Scrubs jail went "sick" yesterday after colleagues were suspended for alleged abuse of prisoners... Page 4

Rainmakers

Heavy rain fell on the Amazon yesterday, putting out fires that have ravaged the area. Two days after Indian shamans performed a rain-making ritual... Page 17

Final act

Mary Allen was replaced as chief executive of the Royal Opera House 40 minutes after delivering her vision of the company's future... Page 5

Papon jury retires

The alleged Nazi collaborator Maurice Papon accused French prosecutors of persecuting him on trumped-up charges. The jury retired last night... Page 15

Ramsden bankrupt

Terry Ramsden, the son of a postman who became one of Britain's richest men, faces a possible prison sentence after being declared bankrupt... Page 6

Fireball XL5

The Fireball discotheque is celebrating the return of drinking after the Indian state of Haryana ended a calamitous experiment with prohibition... Page 18

Political chorus backs D'Oyly Carte

W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan might once have joked that MPs left their brains outside the Commons, but yesterday they would have been grateful for the support Parliament gave to their comic operas. MPs and peers from all parties mounted a fierce defence of the cash-strapped D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and assailed the Arts Council... Pages 1, 2



The Chelsea manager Gianluca Vialli in Italy last night for his club's European Cup Winners' Cup match against Vicenza

Economy

Manufacturers are defying the strong pound, with output rising in March through strong domestic demand, according to The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply... Page 27

Football

Chelsea are hoping that the inside knowledge of their Italian manager, Gianluca Vialli, will work to their advantage in the European Cup Winners' Cup semi-final against Vicenza... Page 52

Cricket

Nick Knight, the England opening batsman, followed up his century in the first one-day international against West Indies by scoring 90 in the second match in Barbados yesterday... Page 52

Rugby league

Wigan Warriors look set to reassert their traditional dominance of the domestic game when the new Super League season opens tomorrow... Page 46

Cricket

First-class umpires will have to sit examinations in future... Page 44

Vickers

Volkswagen is to make an offer for Rolls-Royce directly to Vickers shareholders, bypassing the Vickers board... Page 27

Milk

Dairy farmers may soon be asked to put up funds for Milk Marque because the farmer-owned distribution cooperative wants to expand... Page 27

Markets

The FT-SE 100 Index rose 85.4 points to close at 6017.6. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 108.8 to 108.9 after a rise from \$1.6745 to \$1.6748 and from DM3.0963 to DM3.0970... Page 30



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

MEDIA Why Berlusconi changed his mind on the Murdoch deal

EDUCATION As the conference season looms, John O'Leary reports on how the teaching unions are co-existing with Labour



Best buys

A night of luxury in Claridge's for £100; lots of bargains on Turkish holidays... Page 43

A more basic need

For the Israelis than an arrogant assessment of the capabilities of the Lebanese Army is to recognise the existence and the growing strength of the Lebanese state... Israel will never be able to deal with Lebanon until it grants the recognition that it itself so earnestly craves... Daily Star, Lebanon

TV LISTINGS

Preview: Stephen Tomkinson becomes a walking, scientific experiment. Oktober (ITV, 9pm). Review: Joe Joseph on the glue that holds friendships together... Pages 50, 51

OPINION

A rocky summit

The Asia-Europe summit that opens today urgently needs to progress beyond conventional diplomatic courtesies... Page 23

Beyond our Ken

Mr Blair should be confident that, when there is political diversity, the best policies tend to win... Page 23

Rushing to judgment

It would be wise to wait a little before condemning the victims' compensation structure... Page 23

COLUMNS

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

The Prime Minister was discussing an urgent problem: what on earth is to go into the Millennium Dome? He wrote: "We are forging a new patriotism focused on the potential we can fulfill in the future..." One can turn these phrases over with ever increasing joy; they have a surrealistic lack of meaning... Page 22

MAGNUS LINKLATER

The fact is that he (Alastair Campbell), like Sir Bernard Ingham in his day, reflects the character and policies of his boss, but unlike Sir Bernard, he is up on the parapet to catch the flak as well... Page 22

VACLAV HAVEL

An alliance such as Nato must be designed to protect shared values... the principal bond of such an alliance is solidarity... Page 22

PETER RIDDELL

Reform of the House of Lords is discussed as if it was merely an antiquated and undemocratic part of the British heritage unfitting for the age of Cool Britannia... Page 10

OBITUARIES

General Sir Frank King, GOC and Director of Operations Northern Ireland, 1973-75; Bella Abram, American feminist; Kate Cruise O'Brien, writer and editor; E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Indian Communist... page 25

LETTERS

Danger of disbanding the Territorial Army: violence at football matches... Page 23

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,755

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-27.

- ACROSS: 1 Incredibly long Dutch kipper (3,3,6). 9 Help province that's backward in country (5). 10 Found habit less breakable? (9). 11 Undistinguished collection of letters in dialect (9). 12 Pretend to reveal a secret (3,2). 13 Boss making mistake runs (6). 15 Drugs producing a sign of tiredness, certainly, around onset of night (8). 18 Injury that's felt bad in short holiday (4,4). 19 Girl, a learner displaying temper (6). 22 Estimate length of African mammal (5). 24 Like some photos showing result of good harvest (4,3). 26 Unsatisfactory early part of life for children (9).

Solution to Puzzle No 20754. A crossword grid with words filled in.

Times Two Crossword, page 52

Latest Road and Weather conditions

Table with road and weather conditions for various regions like UK, Ireland, and Europe.

Weather by Fax

Table listing weather forecasts for various cities like London, Paris, and Rome.

World City Weather

Table listing weather forecasts for major world cities like New York, Tokyo, and Sydney.

Motorway

Table listing motorway conditions and road closures.

Car reports by fax

Table listing car accident reports and road closures.

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Table showing sunrise and sunset times for various locations.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

Advertisement for Swissair flights, featuring the text 'Beat even nonstops from London to European destinations...'.

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will be affected by rain moving northwards. Brighter weather later. Scotland and Northern Ireland are expected to be mainly cloudy with patchy rain and drizzle. London, SE, E, NW and Cent N England, E Anglia, E & W Midlands, N. Wales: rain then sunny intervals and a few showers. Wind light or moderate. S or SE veering moderate S. Max 13C (55F). Central S and SW England, Channel Isles, S Wales: bright or sunny intervals, rain later. Wind moderate or fresh S, becoming fresh or strong SE. Max 14C (57F). Lake District, Isle of Man, NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Northern Ireland: cloudy with rain. Wind fresh or strong, E, near-gale on some coasts later. Max 11C (52F). Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland: mainly cloudy, patchy rain. Wind E, fresh or strong. Max 9C (48F). Argyll, NW Scotland: mainly dry, bright intervals. Wind E, strong to near-gale. Max 9C (48F). Orkney, Shetland: cloud, showers. Wind fresh E or NE. Max 7C (45F). Republic of Ireland: rain in North. Bright intervals in South, rain later. Wind E or SE, moderate or fresh. Max 12C (54F). Outlook: unsettled and windy.

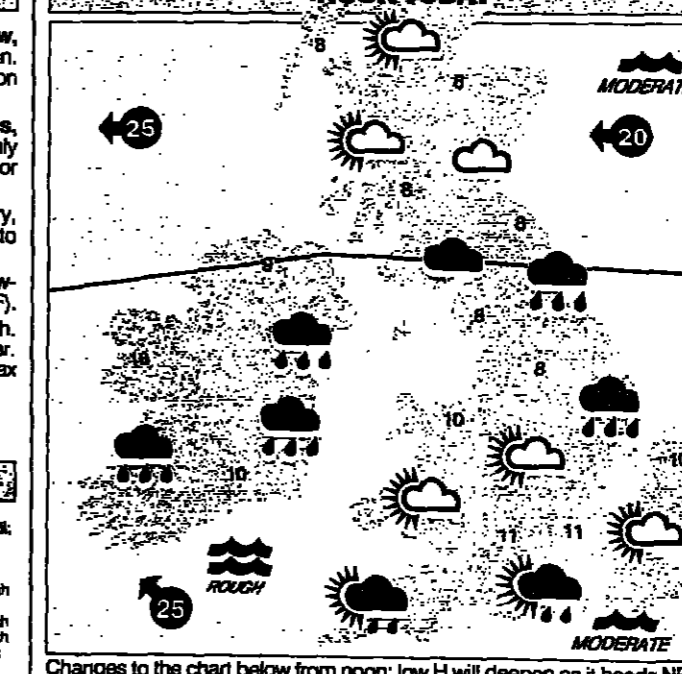
AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday, including temperature, wind, and cloud cover for various locations.

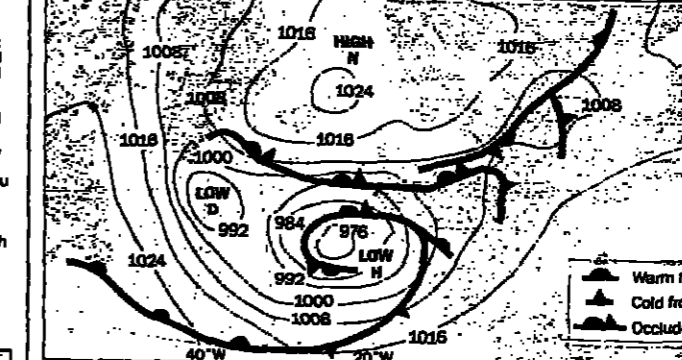
ABROAD

Table showing weather forecasts for various international locations like Moscow, Tokyo, and Sydney.

NOON TODAY



Changes to the chart below from noon: low H will deepen as it heads NE. Low D will remain and fill. High N is expected to decline slowly.



HIGH TIDES

Table showing high tide times for various locations.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Garmouth, 18C (64F); lowest day temp: Spackhead, Cumbria, 6C (43F); highest rainfall: Portland Bill, Dorset, 0.37in; highest sunshine: Burnmouth, Hereford, 8 hr.

Advertisement for American Express travel insurance, offering annual travel insurance for £49.95 a year.

THE TIMES

2

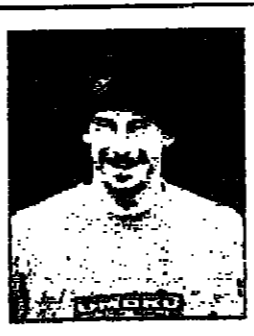
INSIDE SECTION
2
TODAY



BUSINESS
Graham Searjeant looks at the dope test fallacy
PAGE 31



ARTS
What's in a change of name for Jánáček's Vixen?
PAGES 36-39



SPORT
Vialli prepares to take Chelsea over final cup hurdle
PAGES 44-52

TELEVISION AND RADIO
PAGES 50, 51

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY APRIL 2 1998

VW to bid directly to Rolls-Royce shareholders



Chandler: faces revolt

By ADAM JONES
VOLKSWAGEN is to bypass the Vickers board to present a renewed offer for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars directly to shareholders.
One major shareholder said yesterday that Sir Colin Chandler, the Vickers chairman, could face an investor revolt if the board ignored a concrete bid that promised more money than the £340 million that BMW has said it will pay.
On Monday, Vickers, the parent company of the luxury carmaker, said it had accepted in principle the offer from BMW, which has always been seen as the favourite in the

auction process because of its existing engine supply agreement.
Volkswagen, among other bidders, was unhappy with the speed the Vickers made its decision, less than a week after the bid deadline.
Vickers issued a terse statement yesterday after fevered speculation about VW's intentions. This confirmed that the British engineering company is in exclusive negotiations with BMW, which has this privilege until the end of April. It added: "Vickers is therefore not currently in negotiations with any other parties."
Christopher Fisher, who is handling the sale for Lazard, the Vickers adviser, said nothing had changed

since Monday. "Maybe something better will turn up at the end of the day, I'm not banking on it. I want to make sure I have got the bird in the hand before I worry about what's in the bushes."
The major shareholder, who asked not to be named, said the £340 million offered by BMW was not a bad price in the light of some of the pessimistic valuations floating around the City beforehand: "I can't complain about the way the board has handled it so far."
However, Vickers needs shareholder approval at a special meeting probably in May, and the shareholder said the resolution to accept BMW

could be voted down if a watertight better offer is made. "The issue is: how firm is the offer?"
Vickers said BMW could raise its own bid if it got wind of the amount VW was offering. "If VW were to put a concrete offer on the table, BMW will more than likely find out that they have done so."
Bild, the German newspaper, had claimed yesterday that Volkswagen was prepared to add another DM 200 million (£67 million) to its original offer. Bild claimed this was £500 million but this supposedly includes investment.
Volkswagen is keen to enter the super-luxury car market through the

purchase of Rolls, which includes Bentley. The company would not comment yesterday.
BMW's contract to supply engines to the new Rolls-Royce and Bentley models had been seen as a barrier because they would be withdrawn if another party won, forcing up the cost for the winning bidder.
VW would also have to negotiate with Rolls-Royce plc, the aircraft engine maker, which has a contractual clause entitling it to stop a foreign owner from using the Rolls name and bonnet badge on cars. Vickers has previously said this clause, drawn up in the 1970s, contravenes European law and is invalid.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6017.6	(+85.4)
Yield	2.72%	
FTSE All share	2813.23	(+31.57)
Nikkei	16241.66	(-265.51)
New York		
Dow Jones	8617.25	(+17.44)
S&P Composite	1102.00	(+0.25)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	102 1/8%	(102%)
Yield	5.94%	(5.94%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank	7 1/2%	(7 1/2%)
Life long call		
future (Jun)	100%	(100%)

STERLING

New York	1.6727	(1.6730)
London		
\$	1.5755	(1.5748)
DM	3.0881	(3.0888)
FF	10.3800	(10.3750)
SFr	2.5637	(2.5628)
Yen	133.63	(133.32)
£ Index	109.9	(109.8)

CITY MORTGAGE CORPORATION

London	1.8530*	(1.8474)
DM	6.2145*	(6.1940)
FF	1.5389*	(1.5235)
Yen	110.6	(110.7)
£ Index		

Tokyo close Yen 133.25

WILSON JENNER

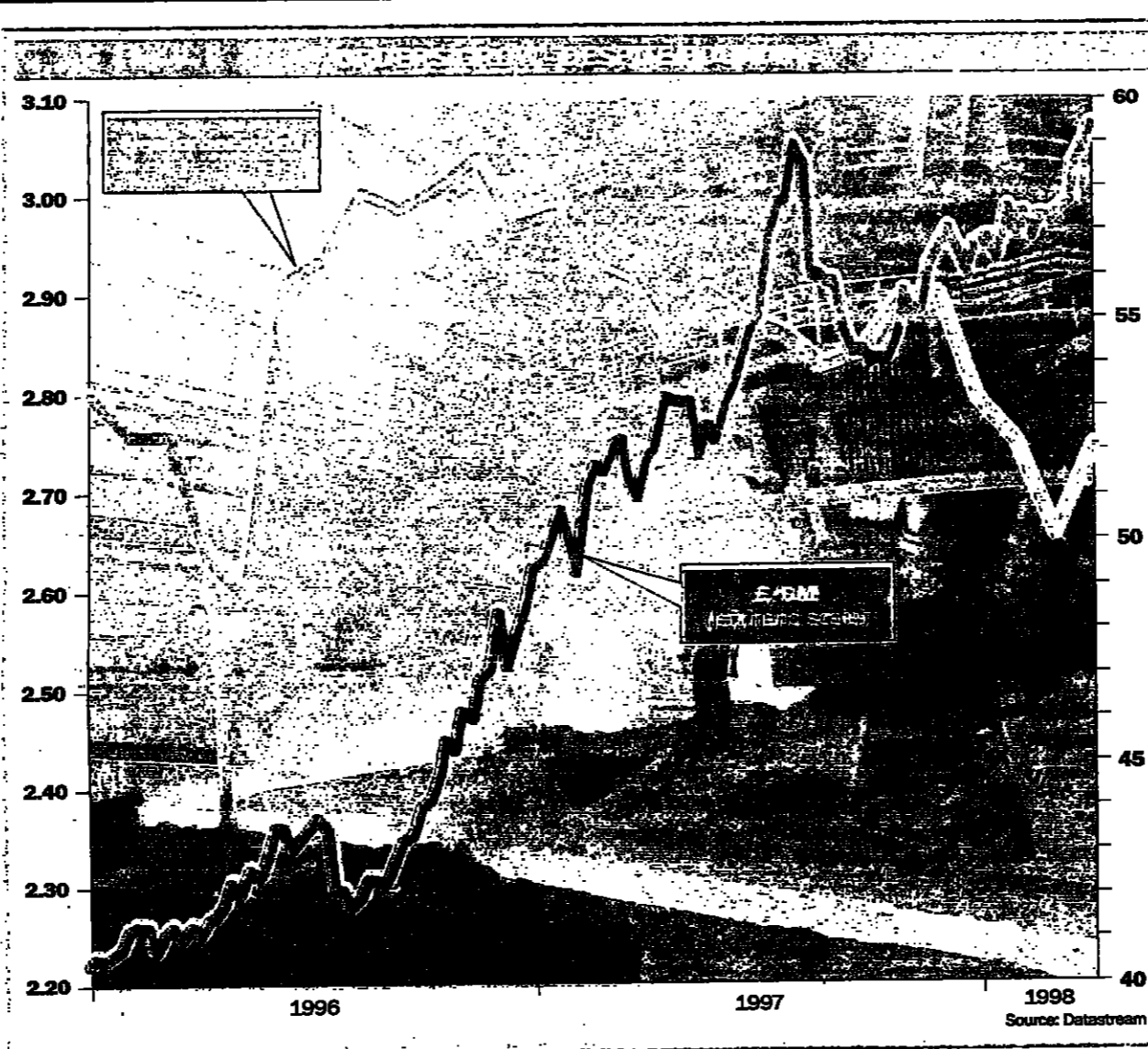
Brent 15-day (Jun)	\$14.55	(\$14.75)
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London close \$301.85 (\$300.55)
* denotes midday trading price

Sterling strength fails to halt rise in output

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

MANUFACTURERS have continued to defy the ravages of a strong pound, with output actually rising in March on the back of strong domestic demand, according to the latest survey by The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply.
The survey bolstered shares in London yesterday. The FTSE 100 index advanced 85.4 points to close at a record 6,017.6 after more than one billion shares were traded.
With the pound trading close to a nine-year high of almost DM3.10 yesterday and exporters complaining of the severe adverse impact on business, the institute said output accelerated in March despite a sharp fall in export orders.
The purchasing managers' overall index rose to a seasonally adjusted 52.2, from 51.0 in February. Any reading above 50.0 indicates growth.
The latest survey highlighted the dilemma that will face the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) when it meets to discuss interest rate policy next Wednesday and Thursday.
Another survey, published today by the Institute of Management (IoM), shows that opinion on what the MPC ought to do with interest rates is deeply divided, depending on whether managers come from the manufacturing or service sectors.
The survey shows that 59 per cent of heads in manufacturing want a cut in interest rates, with a third wanting them to be left unchanged. In the service sector, only 37 per cent of managers support a reduction in interest rates, with 52 per cent wanting them to remain at 7.25 per cent and one in 10 arguing for a rate rise.
Business Strategies, the economic consultancy, will today issue a warning about the growing gap between manufacturing and services. It says that the economy is overheating in London and the South



Halifax faces £10m payoff bill

By RICHARD MILLS
BANKING CORRESPONDENT
HALIFAX could offer as much as £10 million compensation to the Royal Bank of Scotland in the battle for control of Birmingham Midshires — so long as the building society accepts its £780 million takeover offer.
However, payment of the compensation will not come directly from Halifax. Instead, the bank wants any offer to come from the Midshires board, although Halifax will ultimately pick up the tab.
RBS has refused to allow Birmingham Midshires to talk with Halifax since it tabled a rival offer three weeks ago, citing an exclusivity agreement until the end of 1998. RBS agreed a £630 million takeover of the building society last August.
George Mathewson, RBS chief executive, is understood to be willing to release Birmingham Midshires, led by Mike Jackson, from its agreement in return for compensation for legal and advisory expenses.
Commentary, page 29

BICC chief to get bonus of up to £195,000

By JASON NISSÉ AND MARIANNE CURPHEY
ALAN JONES, chief executive of BICC, has joined the company's short-term incentive plan, which could give him a bonus of as much as £195,000 this year, even though BICC said not to benefit from this scheme.
BICC's annual report says that Mr Jones has now joined the short-term scheme, which can pay a bonus of 50 per cent of his £390,000 a year salary, as well as being a member of the group's long-term incentive plan (L-tip).
However, Manifest, the proxy voting agency, has pointed out that when the L-tip was introduced in 1996, BICC said that Mr Jones would not be joining the short-term plan. BICC's poor performance since then — its shares have more than halved in value — means that the L-tip will not pay out much this year. A BICC spokesman said Mr Jones was now allowed to benefit from both schemes because it was now "considered appropriate".
Jim Sutcliffe, who resigned as chief executive of Prudential UK last September, received a £343,000 payoff. This took his total package, including share options and salary paid until he took his new post at Liberty International last month, to more than £1.3 million last year.
Two directors of BAT Industries each received more than £1 million last year. Sandy Leitch, who runs financial services, picked up a bonus of £488,000, taking his pay and options package to £1,003 million, while David Allvey, the finance director, exercised options to make a gain of £644,000, taking his total package to £1.18 million.
At Unilever Niall FitzGerald, the co-chairman, saw his pay package rise 47 per cent to £935,000 last year, thanks to a £240,000 bonus. He is still paid less than his Dutch counterpart, Morris Tabaksblat, who picked up £948,000, a fall of more than £102,000.

CMC sold to Ocwen for £285m

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

CITY MORTGAGE Corporation, the controversial lender whose exorbitant redemption penalties and high interest rates prompted an investigation by the Office of Fair Trading, has been sold for £285 million.
Ocwen Financial Corporation, a \$3.1 billion mortgage servicer in Florida, has agreed to buy CMC's assets and businesses from Cityscape Financial Corporation, its struggling US parent.
Under the deal, £550 million of CMC loans will transfer to Ocwen, the biggest player in the UK's growing "non-status" lending market. The company paid £27.5 million this month for a 33 per cent stake in Norland Capital Group, which owns Kenington Mortgage Company, the second biggest lender to the credit-impaired and self-employed. The latest deal gives Ocwen control of £220 million of loans that CMC has been unable to securitise.
David Steere, former managing director of CMC, who quit last month after the OFT intervention, earned £7 million in salary and options since CMC was formed in 1995.

Wilde card

Wilde Sapté, one of the best-known of the City of London law firms, has thrown in its lot with Arthur Andersen, the accountancy and professional services group.
Page 28

Building up

Alfred McAlpine, the housebuilding and construction group, is to consider offers for its American operations in moves to strengthen its UK business.
Page 30

Milk Marque aims to be a big cheese

By CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

DAIRY farmers in England and Wales may soon be asked to put up funds for a £100 million business venture by Milk Marque. The farmer-owned distribution co-operative wants to expand into cheese and butter manufacture to offset declining demand for raw milk.
Milk Marque recently acquired a small cheese plant in Wales and plans to double its capacity to 8,000 tonnes. Andrew Dare, chairman of Milk

Marque Developments, said further acquisitions and investments were planned which could reach £100 million by the year 2000.
Milk prices have fallen from 27p a litre two years ago to 19p, partly because of the strength of the pound against the European currencies in which the value of EU milk price supports are calculated. The price collapse has devastated the incomes of dairy farmers.
Mr Dare blames lack of investment by the dairy industry for keeping

demand at a low level. "Since deregulation, the market for raw milk has declined by nearly 7 per cent but the major companies don't want to invest in butter and cheese. Milk is perishable; it must be collected. The farmer is at the mercy of the processor."
The first acquisition has been funded off Milk Marque's balance sheet but the organisation has a net worth of just £37 million. Mr Dare admitted that further investment might require going back to the 17,000 members. "We

members, do you want us to build extra demand?" he said.
The strategy will be opposed vigorously by the dairy combines, such as Northern Foods, Unigate and Avonmore Waterford. The big players have complained to the Office of Fair Trading about the operation of Milk Marque's auction, claiming it lacked transparency. The OFT referred the matter to the Monopolies Commission, which is due to report in the autumn.
Commentary, page 29

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Halifax confirms pick-up

By ANNE ASHWORTH

FURTHER evidence of the strengthening of the property market emerged yesterday in the Halifax monthly house price index.

The Halifax said UK house prices rose by 0.6 per cent in March, after a flat February when no increase was seen. The average house price is £70,647, against £67,296 a year ago.

The Halifax predicts that the Budget stamp duty changes will have only marginal effect on prices in London and the South East. The Chancellor doubled the rate of stamp duty on homes of £250,000-plus to 2 per cent. The rate payable on properties of £50,000 or more is now 3 per cent.

On Tuesday the Nationwide Building Society showed prices climbing by 0.8 per cent in March and a pick-up in activity after a winter slowdown.

The Halifax reports a year-on-year increase of just 5 per cent, compared with a 12.3 per cent rise reported by the Nationwide. The results produced by the two organisations show similar data for London and the South, but Halifax's figures for the North suggest that growth in this region of the country is more subdued.

Wilde Sapte to break new ground in Andersen merger

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

WILDE SAPTE, one of the best-known City law firms, has thrown in its lot with Arthur Andersen, the accountancy and professional services group.

The move, expected to be finalised this September, is the first link-up of an established City law firm and one of the top accountancy networks. Wilde Sapte, a 200-year-old firm well known for its banking expertise, will join the English legal practice of Ar-

thur Andersen and bring to 1,400 the total of lawyers now working for the Andersen group worldwide.

Arthur Andersen has been known to want to strengthen its UK legal arm, while Wilde Sapte has suffered in recent years from a rapid expansion of offices abroad and in new areas of practice. The link-up was agreed after an overwhelming 71 out of 73 of Wilde Sapte's partners voted in favour.

Wilde Sapte will merge with Garretts, the law firm that provides Andersen's existing

legal arm in the United Kingdom, and with Dundas & Wilson, its law firm in Scotland.

Steven Blakeley, the managing partner of Wilde Sapte who will become managing partner of Andersen's UK legal practice, said: "Our partners are enthusiastic about this proposition. It offers Wilde Sapte the opportunity to take a major step forward and play the lead role in the development of a world class practice delivering English law internationally."

Wilde Sapte has a total of 73

partners and more than 600 staff. The firm has developed a name for its work in all aspects of banking and finance, including aviation, shipping and trade finance.

Martha Klein, editor of *Legal Business* magazine, said that she thought the move would be a test case. "City firms will now sit back and watch and see what happens. Accountancy firms are very differently structured from law firms, with many more junior staff relative to the number of partners, and it will be interesting to see if Wilde

Sapte comes under pressure to alter this."

In a leading article on the merger next week, the magazine says Wilde Sapte has suffered a loss of key lawyers in recent years. To blame was its expansion abroad, the building up of new practice areas instead of a strong corporate practice and a "relaxed culture and lack of strong central management", which allowed "low-billing partners to while away their middle years in comfortable mediocrity".

Accountancy, page 32

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Managers pay £40m for Meyer division

MEYER INTERNATIONAL, the building materials group, will take an £11 million exceptional charge on the sale of its softwood and panel products business after a plunge in timber prices resulted in a lower-than-expected disposal price. The company had valued the assets at about £45 million but yesterday it agreed a £40 million deal with management of the division.

Economic turmoil in South-East Asia has caused a 30 per cent fall in the price of plywood and softwood. The exceptional charge includes £4 million of goodwill previously written off to reserves. About £33.5 million of the purchase price is to be paid upfront. The net asset value of the businesses sold was £42 million at September 30, 1997. Meyer shares fell 1 1/2 p to 386 1/2 p.

Johnston Press to re-bid

JOHNSTON PRESS, the local newspaper group, expects to relaunch its £52 million bid for Home Counties Newspapers if it receives Monopolies and Mergers Commission clearance. Johnston announced a 44 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £34.6 million in the year to December. Earnings rose to 11.98p a share (10.2p). The total dividend is 3p a share (2.45p) with a 2p final. Margins increased from 18.9 per cent to 24 per cent.

Tempus, page 30

Greenalls' Grand sale

GREENALLS, the pub and leisure group that last year completed its exit from the three-star hotel market, has sold the five-star Grand Hotel in Eastbourne for £14.5 million. The buyer is the privately owned Ellie Hotels, which operates Tynney Hall in Hampshire and Ashdown Park in East Sussex. A spokeswoman said the sale proceeds would be reinvested in the company's De Vere Hotels brand, adding: "We have no plans to sell any of our other hotels."

A taste for Brooks

THE eating-out trend helped Brooks Service Group, the retail service business, to boost its performance last year through an increase in demand for hotel and restaurant linen. The 1997 pre-tax profits rose to £1.66 million from £1.2 million. The company said growth will be enhanced by the disposal of non-profitable high street shops as it moves towards outlets in shopping centres. Earnings per share rose to 9.67p (6.95p). A final dividend of 2.7p gives a 4p total (3.5p).

Kenwood sells Print 4

KENWOOD, the electrical appliances group, has sold its design and printing operation to Romsey Communications Group for £1.3 million. Print 4, which is based in Portsmouth, employs 32 people and is an integrated design studio and printing operation. The group, which has been under shareholder pressure from UK Active Value, has been cutting costs and shedding non-core operations to concentrate on its core business of making kitchen appliances.

Quintain acquisition

QUINTAIN ESTATES, the property company, has acquired Estates Property Investment Company (Epic) for £22.2 million in cash and shares. The purchase includes a 120,000 sq ft retail and leisure complex in Sheffield and a 98,000 sq ft development in Leeds. The portfolio generates annual income of £2.2 million. Quintain is assuming Epic debts, including a £11.5 million mortgage debenture and loans worth £2.6 million repayable on April 30. Quintain shares were unchanged at 202 1/2 p.

Argos ready to fire final shot at GUS

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM
RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

ARGOS will tomorrow reveal its final defence against the £1.6 billion hostile bid by Great Universal Stores after the Government's decision not to block the deal.

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, said yesterday that the proposed deal would not be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The news lifted Argos shares 2 1/2 p to 645p in the expectation that GUS, led by Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale, will substantially increase its initial 570p offer price.

GUS has seven days to decide whether to up the price, and is thought likely to move early next week. The Argos defence will centre on the return of up to £400 million cash to shareholders. This will further raise the pressure on GUS to lift its offer to at least 650p.

The war of words between the two sides escalated. Lord Wolfson said: "Stuart Rose's quick fix 'solutions' threaten Argos: targeting a margin increase when Argos' price leadership has fallen risks alienating Argos' customer base." Stuart Rose replied that the final defence document "will demonstrate to shareholders that the substantive value of their business makes GUS' bid look woefully inadequate".



Stephen Marks plans to build on the British success

Strong sales fashioned by French Connection

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

FRENCH CONNECTION bucked the gloomy trend on the high street yesterday by reporting strong sales of both its core brand, aimed at the teenage market, and of its more sophisticated Nicole Farhi clothing.

Like-for-like retail sales in Britain were up 4.8 per cent last year and are currently even higher. By contrast, Next last week reported that sales have dipped in recent week.

French Connection made a pre-tax profit of £8.2 million in the year to January 31, up from £6.2 million. Earnings per share were 27.5p (17.6p) and the final dividend will be 25p (2.25p), giving a full-year pay out of 3.25p (2.75p). The final dividend will be paid on July 1.

Stephen Marks, chief executive, said the company plans to build on its British success by expanding overseas. A large new Nicole Farhi shop

is to open in New York and French Connection stores are to open in Australia. Talks are also going on to open more branches in Europe and the company is looking for a partner in Japan.

Expansion is also on the cards in Britain, where the company is to launch a mail order catalogue this month, and plans to open about ten stores per year for the next ten years.

ITC moves to end TV channel bundling

By RAYMOND SNOOPY
MEDIA EDITOR

THE Independent Television Commission has taken action to ensure that viewers who want to subscribe for premium channels such as Sky Sports or Sky Movies do not have to buy subscriptions for less popular cable or satellite channels — a practice known as "bundling".

The move was widely welcomed despite the threat that it may result in fewer channels.

The ITC said bundling restricted and distorted viewer-choice. In bundling, wholesalers such as BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*, insist that cable companies have to offer a large package of basic channels to at least 80 per cent of their subscribers.

The recommendations will end an element of protection for channels with low viewing figures, which until now have been included in the big basic package. Companies such as Flextech, which specialises in basic rather than premium channels, could be affected by the move.

However, Roger Luard, the chief executive of Flextech said the extra flexibility was in the best interests of consumers. "If channels don't work they should be changed anyway."

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.83	2.45
Austria Sch	22.76	21.10
Belgium Fr	95.89	82.03
Canada \$	2.87	2.309
Cyprus Cyp£	0.942	0.871
Denmark Kr	12.38	11.49
Finland Mk	5.95	9.20
France Fr	10.88	10.05
Germany Dm	3.26	3.02
Greece Dr	954	925
Hong Kong \$	13.79	12.59
Iceland	134	114
Ireland Pt	1.28	1.19
Israel Shk	6.41	5.78
Italy Lira	2027	2020
Japan Yen	257.76	250.23
Malta	0.701	0.642
Netherlands Gld	3.76	3.281
New Zealand \$	3.18	2.94
Norway Kr	13.40	12.46
Portugal Esc	202.56	207.53
S Africa Rd	9.14	8.18
Spain Ptas	274.10	265.31
Sweden Kr	14.22	13.12
Switzerland Fr	2.77	2.48
Turkey Lira	411.523	381.845
USA \$	1.780	1.657

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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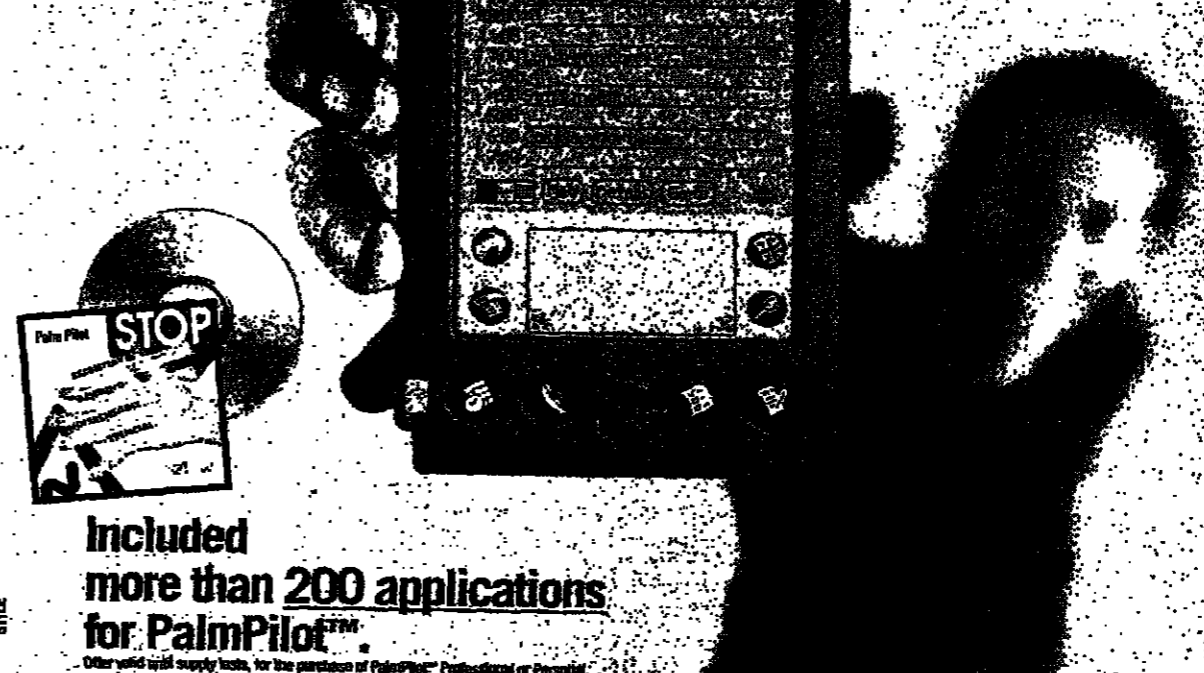


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GTech still in the game

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor



Well that's all right then. The reputationally challenged GTech is no longer a shareholder in Camelot Group. It has paid the price of having a chairman, now former chairman, who tried to corrupt the saintly Richard Branson and been banished from enjoying the fruits of involvement with the UK's National Lottery.

Really? Not quite. Certainly GTech is to be erased from the shareholders' list but hardly on confiscatory terms. In fact, the company is collecting a cool £51 million for listing more than lowering its profile in a manner that might make its involvement invisible to a short-sighted regulator. It collects its original stake money, its share of accumulated profits and a sum to equate to the dividends it would have received as a shareholder.

On this basis, GTech might be said to be benefiting from its change of status, since it gets the cash up front. Nonetheless, Camelot says that expelling GTech from its share register "is the right response to the public mood for a largely British-owned operator of the National Lottery and that it is in the best interests of lottery players".

Even Anthea Turner might see through this flannel. GTech remains as intimately involved with the lottery as ever it was for the simple reason that Camelot

cannot operate without it. The company has the essential technical expertise, gained from being integral to the operation of two thirds of the world's lotteries. Such expertise brings rich rewards: last year, GTech made nearly \$800 million from its service agreements, and a slice of that came from the UK.

The four companies that joined GTech to create the new Camelot knew the background of the colourful Guy Snowden and his crew but were happy to link with GTech. It is mere window dressing for them to try to argue that they are now any less closely connected with GTech because of its lack of shares.

Whether the promised team of five regulators destined to replace the stand in John Stoker will be impressed by the change remains to be seen. But they too will, no doubt, be made aware of the practical impossibility of separating GTech from the National Lottery without blighting, at least temporarily, the dreams of a large part of the nation. And just as it would be hugely difficult to remove GTech, so there could be enormous prob-

lems in replacing Camelot. Should it not win the next contract to operate the lottery. The special fills installed with retailers throughout the land remain the property of Camelot. So the Government as well as the co-owners of the company has an interest in putting the best possible gloss on what is merely a public relations exercise.

Midshires must give RBS a graceful exit

What price should be put on a banker's injured pride? The question is one that must now be exercising the minds of the board of the Birmingham Midshires Building Society. If it will hand over a cheque to compensate Royal Bank of Scotland for losing its bid to take over Midshires, the

building society will be set free to accept the significantly higher offer from Halifax. This would be a commonsense solution to an impasse which threatened to leave all parties, including more than a million Midshires members, in limbo. But how big will the cheque need to be?

The redoubtable George Mathewson could have played gooseberry and stood in the way of the Halifax and Midshires wedding until his exclusivity agreement expires next January. But such intransigence would have won him few friends.

As Mathewson's stance has softened, so has that of the Halifax chief executive, Mike Blackburn. He had initially intimated that there was no question of compensation being paid. For Blackburn, the face-saving formula may be to stand back and allow Midshires' Michael Jack-

son to proffer the cheque, although, since its honouring will be conditional on a successful merger, it is Halifax that would eventually pick up the tab.

Now all that remains is to settle the amount. Months of due diligence and manoeuvring around building societies' regulations can run up the bills. Estimates of the costs amassed by RBS so far hover between £5 million and £10 million. Yet there are suggestions that Midshires' own thoughts are somewhat lower, perhaps down to a paltry £2 million, which barely buys you a learned opinion or two from a Scottish lawyer, let alone a set of pro forma accounts.

There can be no hint of parsimony if RBS is to be allowed to bow out with grace. It may be galling for Michael Jackson to have to throw good money for the loss of a deal

which had been likely to bring him a very senior role in a rather larger organisation. But then, if he does the decent thing now, it may even enhance his reputation, and perhaps his job prospects, in the eyes of Dr Mathewson.

Food for thought down on the farm

Just as well that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has given itself a leisurely nine months to opine about the state of the milk market. By the time it delivers its judgment, the landscape may have changed beyond recognition. At first glance, this looks like a battle that pits hill farmer Jones and Daisy the cow against the combined ranks of multinational agribusiness.

The reality is more complex. Farmer Jones produces a commodity and in that respect he is little different to British Steel or the Saudi Arabian oil sheiks, buffeted by supply gluts, demand famines and the currency markets. But in two important

respects he differs: milk is perishable and milk is a rigged market with a price floor maintained by the European Union. However, price support will soon go and meanwhile, downstream, the retailers become increasingly efficient: a few superstore owners now exercise almost complete control over the liquid milk market in Britain. Belatedly, the dairy processors are trying to seize the initiative, gobbling each other up, building market share.

Where does that leave the farmers? Far behind. Milk Marquee will have trouble convincing the MMC it can be both a fair auctioneer and a buyer. Dairy farmers should think twice about putting their pennies in Marquee's new cheese plants. They would do better buying the neighbour's farm.

Figures to order

GORDON BROWN could hardly have wished for more. Just hours after he had demonstrated his imperviousness to pleas for a lower pound come figures to show that manufacturing industry is actually enjoying an upturn in orders and that stocks are being kept tight. But the same data does demonstrate that exports are being hit. The hawks on the MPC should bear that in mind when they feel the urge to ratchet up interest rates again.

Bae criticised for failing to set out deals timetable

By ADAM JONES

BRITISH AEROSPACE and its Airbus partners were criticised yesterday by a powerful committee of MPs after failing to agree a timetable for mergers.

Bae, with Aerospatiale of France and Dasa of Germany, had been asked by their governments to come up with "a clear plan and timetable for action" by March 31.

The three groups responded with a joint statement last week, alongside Casa of Spain, which said they all agreed on the principle of "a possible merger" to compete with US groups such as Boeing, but failed to say when it might happen.

Michael Colvin, chairman of the House of Commons Defence Select Committee, said it was "the understatement of the year" to say that their joint announcement was short of detail.

He claimed that aerospace companies have been talking about consolidation for 20

years: "How much longer is this talk going to go on for?"

Kevin Smith, the Bae deputy managing director, admitted the lack of detail but said the issue of state ownership — Aerospatiale is controlled by the French Government — had to be resolved first.

He also said European governments needed to be consistent in their procurement practices and avoid the needless internal competition typified by the three separate European fighter programmes.

As MPs from both the Defence and Trade and Industry committees quizzed Mr Smith and senior representatives of other aerospace and defence groups, GEC said it was close to completing a major European alliance of its own.

GEC has been in talks for eight months with Alenia of Italy over an electronics joint venture that would pool activities in such areas as radar,

battlefield control systems and air traffic control.

GEC had previously sought to link with Thomson-CSF, the French electronics group, but was rebuffed by the French Government. GEC and Alenia will each take 50 per cent of the joint venture, which will be registered in The Netherlands.

Although it was not formally asked to make proposals on defence restructuring to the Government, GEC submitted a document outlining its own vision of the industry's future.

The contents have not been revealed, but GEC is thought to have argued strongly against a "Fortress Europe" mentality that would damage the potential for alliances with US groups. GEC has been eyeing the defence electronics arm of Northrop Grumman, which may have to be sold to placate US regulators and save its merger with Lockheed Martin.

Lloyds takes £100m loss on Black Horse sale

By RICHARD MILES
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

LOYDYS TSB is to take a £100 million loss on the sale of Black Horse and its other estate agency businesses to Bradford & Bingley Building Society. Bradford & Bingley is paying £56 million for the business, the UK's fourth largest estate agency. The deal brings 370 branches to the building

society, which will more than double its branch network.

Christopher Rodrigues, chief executive of Bradford & Bingley, said there were no plans to make any of the 3,400 staff redundant. "This is not a rationalisation party. Rather, it's an expansion that will put us on virtually every high street," he said.

Mr Rodrigues said the society would temporarily retain the Black Horse

brand. The deal requires around 150 former bank staff to continue to act for at least six months as the tied agents of Black Horse Financial Services, the life assurance arm of Lloyds TSB.

Along with the estate agency, Bradford & Bingley acquires the country's biggest business relocation service, a property management company and a significant surveying and valuations business. David Woodcock,

managing director of Black Horse, also comes with the transaction.

Lloyds TSB said it would book a £30 million profit on the sale but a charge for goodwill, previously written off against reserves, would lead to a net loss of £100 million in its 1998 interim accounts.

In May 1997 Lloyds TSB sold Mortgage Express to B&B for £64 million.

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Dixons swallows more of market with Byte deal

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM
RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

DIXONS, the electronics retailing group, has tightened its grip on the personal computer market by buying Byte Computer Superstores from the privately owned Specialist Computer Holdings for the nominal sum of £50,000.

Dixons is also acquiring a freehold property from SCH in Solihull for £4.9 million. Byte operates 16 stores in the UK, with a further 45 concessions within Office World outlets.

Byte employs about 500 staff. Sales for the year to March 31 were approximately £80 million.

The Byte name will disappear as Dixons absorbs the Byte stores into its own PC World, Currys and Dixons formats. However, Dixons intends to offer work to the majority of Byte's staff.

John Clare, the Dixons chief executive, said: "The personal computer market is intensely competitive but this acquisition demonstrates our confidence in its long-term future and its continued growth potential."



John Clare expressed confidence over Dixons' future

Irish group sets circulation targets for new titles

Independent tops £100m

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

INDEPENDENT Newspapers, the Irish group that yesterday took over formal ownership of *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday* newspapers, said that it had yet to earmark any new investment for the titles.

The Irish group, headed by Tony O'Reilly, refused to confirm stories that it was prepared to invest £50 million over five years in the titles. Earnings per share for the year had not yet been decided on, although

there will be "significant" investment in editorial.

The aim is to take the circulation of *The Independent* to 250,000 and its Sunday sister to 300,000.

The hints on the future of *The Independent* came yesterday as Independent Newspapers announced record pre-tax profits of Ir£100.1 million (£81 million). This included a Ir£12 million net gain on disposals. Earnings per share for the group — which has a market

capitalisation that recently reached Ir£1 billion — rose 39 per cent to Ir23p. A final dividend of Ir5.2p makes a total of Ir7.8p, an increase of 13 per cent.

Mr O'Reilly, the group's chairman, said yesterday that the current year had begun strongly in all the company's markets and the decision to acquire full ownership of Wilson & Horton in New Zealand would further enhance earnings growth in 1998.

Decriminalisation fails the dope test



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Over the weekend, thousands gathered in London to demand that smoking of cannabis be no longer subject to prosecution. Yesterday, a new police leadership in North Yorkshire announced its arrival by arresting almost 200 suspected drug offenders in dawn swoops. Much as these two groups might loathe each other, they are essentially on the same side. These are the far-flung flanks of a frustrated army. It is losing a long war against one of the costliest social and economic ills of the age.

Trade in narcotics that were made illegal in the first two decades of the century has grown hugely in the past 35 years. Worldwide, it may turn over £240 billion a year. Cannabis/marijuana, usually rated the cheapest and least harmful, probably has 10-20 per cent of the illegal narcotics market by value. By volume, it is market leader.

In the UK, cannabis accounts for 85 per cent of drug arrests. Four times as many people are stopped for possession or trading as ten

years ago but two-thirds are now let off with a caution or less, ten times as many as in the mid-1980s. The authorities clearly now worry much more about the crime generated by the trade's illegality than by the evils of the drug. Narcotics are the chief commodities of organised crime, breeding violence, corruption, gang wars and all the lesser offences that are taken for granted by outlaws. The state spends £500 million a year fighting the drug trade.

At family level, some police experts think 40 per cent of non-addicts' lifestyles; their fear of the dark, their spending on locks, alarms and insurance. Cannabis users steal far less than heroin

users only because their drug costs less.

No wonder that the appointment of a "drug czar" and development of a national crime squad has been accompanied by another campaign to change the law. This one has been orchestrated by the *Independent on Sunday*, whose editor, a child of hippiedom, only wants pot-smoking to stop being a criminal offence. Given decades of war propaganda, this is reckoned to be the most politicians could concede without declaring unconditional surrender to drug barons. But this modest change would leave production, supply and trading of cannabis illegal, along with all other drugs - for now.

Millions of words have been written about this drug culture clash over six months, but the campaign to "decriminalise" cannabis does not seem to have been considered even basic dope-level

remains illegal. To meet higher demand, prices would rise, breeding more organised crime and more small-time crimes against innocent third parties. Only a grow-your-own movement might ease this, if that too were allowed.

Other trades that live in this twilight of legal ambiguity, such as prostitution and pornography, suggest that it breeds crime, exploits young people who are beyond legal regulation, and generates the monopoly profits that are the rent of crime for those prepared to take the risk. It is a manifesto for mafias.

The only true alternative to today's trench warfare is to convert cannabis, and possibly other illegal drugs, into legal trades run by respectable corporations. In that case, supply would rise dramatically, slashing prices and improving quality. Why should cannabis cost more than tobacco? Supply

could then be regulated and taxed instead of causing crime.

That is why, for instance, both Milton Friedman, the disciplined monetarist, and Professor Jim Gower, the father of City regulation, thought the trade should be legal. Professor Friedman, admittedly, tends to take *caveat emptor* to extremes, damning the long delays in testing new medicines before they can be sold.

Inevitably, a legal low-price cannabis industry would sell far more of the stuff than the illegal trade or even the one-sided legality of decriminalisation. So the real danger of the drug become critical and we are back to the old question of whether tobacco and alcohol would be allowed if they came into use now. A House of Lords committee is investigating cannabis. But as the pharmaceuticals industry knows, all drugs are dangerous. Any powerful chemi-

cal, used regularly, is likely to have unwelcome side-effects. The issue is whether "recreational use" can be balanced against such risks.

Libertarians such as the cannabis campaigners are gaining victories at the same time as paternalists anxious to protect consumers. This leads to bizarre overlaps.

Abortion is effectively available on demand and curious teenage boys are, we learn, too protection from dirty old men. Yet casinos cannot advertise and families can no longer buy more than a dozen aspirin at a time, enormously raising the cost.

The common thread may be that libertarians are winning on moral issues; paternalists rule ever more sternly on commercial ones. This may be another manifestation of British prejudice against profit, which so bedevils utilities. If libertarians succeeded in legalising cannabis, paternalists hardened by the battle against cigarettes would seek to protect children, sue for side-effects and soon drive it underground again.

'Robber-baron' thirsts for capitalist respectability

Vladimir Potanin is the epitome of Russian capitalism. Barely 36, he is reputed to be the richest man in Russia. He master-minded the Yeltsin presidential re-election campaign and served for a year as Deputy Prime Minister in the Yeltsin Government.

The phrase "robber-baron" appears to have been coined by Russians, for Mr Potanin, who has moved from obscurity to the core of the tangled web of the business/political community in lightning quick time.

The stock market-quoted elements of his Interros business empire, which encompasses everything from telecoms and oil to the Moscow Army sporting club, are valued at \$32 billion. Russia's almost non-existent company laws make it difficult to assess his personal wealth but estimates suggest US\$3 billion (£1.8 billion).

It would be easy to caricature Mr Potanin as the quintessential self-made man. A minor bureaucrat, it has taken him less than eight years to assemble his sprawling business group. A member of the Communist Youth Organisation, he was too young to ever become part of the nomenclature that dominated Soviet political-industrial life.

Alasdair Murray meets the man driving Russians Westward

sonal contact alone compensate for the almost total absence of a legal structure. His office in the Moscow headquarters of Unexim Bank, which used to serve as a State trading bank, gently hint at his status without being too ostentatious. The only obvious personal artifacts are a Russian flag in the corner and an ornate grandfather clock. He conducts the interview in near-perfect English, coloured only by an appealing Slavic accent and a disarming employment of the word



Potanin: oozes charisma

"frankly" whenever the subject matter becomes controversial. As befits a keen chess player, he possesses the kind of strategic brain that to date has always kept him two moves ahead of rivals. He has helped to mould the development of capitalism in Russia, serving as the first deputy chairman of the Russian Government during 1996. He was the architect of the infamous loans-for-shares privatisation scheme, which involved the Government lending shares in State enterprises in return for badly needed

bridging loans. If the loans were not repaid by a deadline, the bank that made the original loan became the permanent owner of the shares. To the surprise of few, Mr Potanin became one of the biggest beneficiaries of the scheme.

Few Russian businessmen are yet prepared to risk the ire of the country's nationalist right by linking up with the West. Mr Potanin has, however, not only sold a 10 per cent stake in Sidanko, the oil company, to BP, but teamed up with George Soros to gain a 25 per cent stake in Syvainvest, the regional telecoms group.

The link with Mr Soros is particularly daring, because the billionaire investor has not only been a vocal critic of Russia but is Jewish, and anti-semitism still runs deep in Russia. Mr Potanin notably combines these Western contacts with a role as one of the largest donors to the Russian Orthodox Church and a habit of talking grandly about encouraging the "spiritual re-birth of the Russian church".

Now, however, Mr Potanin is preparing to take his biggest gamble, one that could prove a turning point not just for his conglomerate but for the future of Russia. He wants to end the period of red-raw capitalism, characterised by the rise of "robber-baron", himself included, and bring the system firmly under Western style laws. He explains: "I want to make an example for other Russian companies so that they can become more transparent."

In the immediate term, Mr Potanin needs to become an upstanding Western-style businessman because he needs access to substantial capital. "I am big enough to stop having to prove it to everyone. It is time to pay more attention to the assets," he said.

Most of his companies are beset with the problems associated with former communist-run industries: out-dated equipment, inefficient working practices and debts often running into billions of dollars. It will take more than a small cash injection to turn these companies around, but Western investors are understandably wary of loaning huge sums when the Russian business environment remains so

opaque. BP has helped give Mr Potanin a nudge in the right direction, expressing serious reservations over a Sidanko bond issue that ignored the rights of the minority owners.

"The rules of the game have changed very quickly," Mr Potanin admits. "What we did was more or less OK a couple of years ago but it is clearly not acceptable now."

It is Mr Potanin's long-term target of trying to extricate business from politics that danger is that a sudden change in Government will result in the rapid demolition of Russia's new business empires. Mr Potanin says he is now reluctant to declare his political affiliations and appears intolerant of the series of scandals - in which his companies have been embroiled a number of times - that have been played out in the Russian media these past six months and dubbed "the banker's war".

He predicts "a lot of scandals as candidates position themselves" for the presidential election campaign.

With no sense of irony, Mr Potanin, however, claims his real concern is that too much business and political power has become concentrated in too few hands. "If we had 30 or so well-established companies there would be less scandals," he said. "The influence of business should become less, the concentration of capital should decrease, business involvement with political affairs should diminish."

While Russia's young democracy remains in such a fragile state, Mr Potanin's reformist ambitions appear optimistic. Yet he believes that Russia could evolve to become a more normal capitalist society in a relatively short time.

"In eight or ten years we will have a new generation of leaders. Younger, more competitive and more aggressive. If we can push through the necessary reforms, people will adjust and begin to feel more comfortable with the new laws." If Mr Potanin can make the transition from "robber-baron" to respectable capitalist, Russia might just follow.



Vladimir Potanin wants to encourage the "spiritual re-birth of the Russian church"

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Russian bank faces long thaw at its frozen asset

Alasdair Murray counts the blessing of nickel in Norilsk

By normal standards, the City of Norilsk should not exist. Located deep inside the Arctic Circle, the City lies some 3,000 miles from Moscow and more than 1,000 miles from the provincial capital of Krasnoyarsk.

The climate makes Moscow look positively tropical: the average year-round temperature is minus 14C and in the depths of winter the thermometer dips below minus 50C, while the wind reaches speeds well in excess of 100mph. Even in the brief summer weeks, the plague of mosquitoes that arrives with warmer weather makes it impossible to go outside without being fully covered.

The city's quarter of a million inhabitants are left to console themselves with the thought that at least the cold of Norilsk is a dry one, making conditions a touch more bearable in winter than the Russian heartland, or so claim those who live there.

Norilsk does, however, have one major asset. It sits on top of one of the largest reserves of nickel ore in the world, capable of supplying about 20 per cent of global nickel production each year, as well as a substantial slice of the palladium and platinum markets. The Communist Government of the Soviet Union, desperate to shore up its supplies of these vital metals, set about creating the city with no thought of the real economic costs of the project.

The cash-strapped Government of Russia, which assumed control after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was left with little choice but to privatise the company, which was no longer able to honour its wages bill.

Unexim Bank secured a 38 per cent stake in the company, under the loans-for-shares scheme, at the knockdown price of US\$250 million (£150 million). In the bargain, however, the bank has had to cover back taxes and

agree to \$300 million of immediate investment. The bank had acquired not only an inefficient relic of the communist era but also taken control of the entire city around it, complete with the costs of maintaining food supplies, power generation, the local telecom system and the upkeep of the buildings.

This has left the privatised company with a double dilemma. The mining company was already grossly overmanned. Yet it can hardly dismiss workers in a city that offers no other job prospects. Besides, the heavy subsidies received for Norilsk mean that the company, which employs 110,000, would continue to pick up the bill for the redundant workers anyway. So Unexim is left relying on the fact that the dismal weather forces 1,000 people to leave the company each month.

More difficult to deal with are the 40,000 pensioners who live in the city. Many of them are reluctant to leave. By Russian standards, Norilsk provides a good pension and well-designed accommodation. The former workers also take a certain pride in the city, which they helped forge out of the tundra. The company has had little choice but to try to encourage an exodus by buying up apartments - which will never be resold - to provide the pensioners with money to purchase flats elsewhere.

Unexim is understandably not best pleased that it has been left bearing such massive, and seemingly open-ended, human costs. It points out that it is paying \$1 billion a year in taxes but the City receives none of the normal state services from the Government. The company accepts, however, there is little hope of any fresh help from the State and that it will simply have to sit and wait for the Arctic weather to persuade people to desert Norilsk.

Reconstruction and Development in London, vacant for two months now, must fall to a Frenchman. Philippe Lagayette, once deputy governor of the Bank of France and former bag carrier to Jacques Delors, should be heading this way shortly, once the central bank job has gone to Duisenberg. So restoring the French succession founded by Jacques Attali. Terrific.

MARTIN WALLER

Greek-bearing gift

I AM delighted that Lakis Athanasiou, a true heavy-weight in the water sector in more ways than one, is part of the new intake salvaged by Commerzbank out of the ruins of UBS. Delighted for his good fortune, and because it allows me to repeat the goat story. He is moving along with the UBS

property, insurance, technology, metals and mining and oil and gas teams. No sign of John Aitken, banks guru being courted by Commerzbank, but as UBS says he doesn't work there any more, it can only be a matter of time. As to the goats, Athanasiou, as Greek as the Elgin Mar-

bles, was at an investment analysts' dinner a while back, and related a funny proverb from the old country. Apparently, in Greece... actually, I think I'll leave the next bit out to be on the safe side.

I HEAR an intriguing bit of title-tattle about the Savoy. A usually reliable City source tells me that one of the American predators eyeing the team at Cliveden to take over the management in the event of a successful bid, I call John Thum, the Swiss hotelier who, it would be irrelevant to point out, is married to Jenny Agutter and who is managing director of Cliveden. "In my dreams," he says. "Nice rumour - keep it going."



A dream of a job: the management team at Cliveden is rumoured to have been offered control of the Savoy



earthly, from the Internet, via an intermediary who advises me to remember the date. But Americans, as we know, have no sense of humour, so we can take it the Dream Solution Venture Corporation of Las Vegas, Nevada, is on the level. So to speak. A corporation based on sound knowledge and mission to give our gift of total awareness about ourselves and the Universe we live in to people.

Lots of this sort of stuff, and

about investing in space technology and interstellar travel. But they want your money, and are offering astronomical, as it were, returns. To any species in the cosmos, it seems, because once the money is invested, "the entity may also reinvest his or her earnings". His or her? What's this, discrimination against hermaphroditic Martian slime moulds? Somewhat speculative.

CU Jimmy?

A REPORT arrives claiming to show the Scots in a new light. They are the least likely of all the peoples sharing these isles to have saved for their retirement, and they are not ashamed of their lack of thrift. Even if they had known 15 years ago that they would face a penurious old age, two thirds would still not have changed the provisions they made. This is based on research from the Prudential. So we can conclude that the Scots may not have changed their national characteristics, but they have learnt how to send pension salesmen packing.

"STUDY the past, if you would divine the future." A quotation from Confucius which adorns the front of the annual report of PSD, the recruitment specialist, and therefore wins the company the title of most pretentious message to shareholders this year. Although the season is yet young.

Job sharing

IN A week when the nation, the newspapers and even our political leaders appear transfixed by the (non-existent) jailing of a (non-existent) travel agent in a (non-existent) northern town, any departure into the fantasy land of April Fool's jokes in the press would seem otiose.

But I was amused by a report in the French financial daily *La Tribune* suggesting that the legman over who should head the European Central Bank has been broken. After the success of the Parisian anti-pollution policy of banning cars on alternate days depending on



Après moi? Jacques Attali's successor, a Frenchman of course, could be on his way to London soon

سكوت غال

Gloomy start for Japan's Big Bang reforms

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

JAPAN'S "Big Bang" financial reforms, aimed at making Tokyo a global financial centre as vibrant as New York and London, began yesterday under a cloud. Tokyo share prices fell, the yen slipped, and the liquidation of a finance company offered a stark reminder of the massive bad loans overhanging the nation's financial sector.

controls, and the liberalisation of stock brokerage commissions on large-lot deals. But the Government's timetable stretches until 2001, and includes measures to tear down barriers and strip away rules that have long stifled Japan's financial markets.

Western bankers and fund managers are streaming into Japan to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by Mr Hashimoto's pledge to bring the nation's financial system up to global standards of competition and transparency.

Rescue hope at Forward Technology

FORWARD Technology Industries, the audio and electronics group, revealed it has been approached by a potential buyer and is in discussions to form a deal that may rescue the troubled company (Kathy Lipari writes).

The announcement gave the shares a much-needed boost, ending the day up 1 1/2p at 16 1/4p.

There had been speculation that the company had been looking for a buyer for some of its individual operations after the recent slump in its share price.

Since early 1996 a series of profit warnings and difficulties at its US operations have driven shares from a high of 100p to a recent low of 7 1/2p.

Forward Technology is due to report its annual results tomorrow. Analysts are expecting a pre-tax loss of £2.2 million for 1997.



Organised: Robin Field, chief executive, right, and Christopher Brace, finance director

Filofax sells Henry Ling to private buyer

FILOFAX, the former 1980s wonderstock, has sold Henry Ling, the troubled greeting cards manufacturer it bought for £5.4 million four years ago (Fraser Nelson writes). The company said it raised only £1 million from a "private buyer" and expects a £6.5 million loss on disposal, although £4.8 million has already been written off as good will.

It also issued a mild profits warning and added that it is still in talks with "third parties" about "strategic opportunities open to the business." The City read this as a takeover plea and the shares fell 9 1/2p to 187 1/2p.

Tempus, page 30

Vodafone shares boosted as subscriber base grows

BY OUR CITY STAFF

SHARES in Vodafone rose 3 1/2p to 628 1/2p after the mobile phone operator reported better than expected growth in British subscriber numbers.

Net new subscribers totalled 172,000 in the first quarter of 1998, compared with 67,000 at the same stage last year. Analysts' forecasts were for 130,000 to 170,000 net new additions.

Vodafone said 80,000 of the new additions subscribed to the company's pre-pay packages and that the total size of its British network was 3.43 million subscribers. One analyst

said: "The British number is just ahead of our top-of-the-range forecast for 170,000 which is obviously a good showing. Also pre-pay packages accounted for 80,000 of the total adds, which is lower than our forecast 85,000. That is good news as we still believe pre-pay customers are ultimately less valuable."

Also reporting first-quarter figures were Cellnet, owned 60 per cent by British Telecom and 40 per cent by Securicor, and One2One, the network owned equally by Cable &

Strategic review to be held at De La Rue

BY CARL MORTFISHED INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

HUGE overcapacity in the banknote printing market has forced De La Rue to take a hard look at its own operations. The security printing group, which also owns a stake in Camelot, the lottery firm, has delegated James Hussey, aged 36, to shake up the combined banknote and banknote paper business, which would be run separately from the cheques, brand protection and Euro businesses.

De La Rue said that the new banknote managing director's job would be to conduct a strategic review to determine what should be done about the overcapacity in the market. Richard Laing, finance director, said: "There will be no sacred cows. We will look at all the options."

De La Rue's banknotes business has suffered from poor margins because of price-cutting by competitors. Despite claiming between 50 per cent and 60 per cent of the world market, De La Rue has little control over pricing: the huge cost of banknote printing plants means that competitors will tender for jobs at slim margins just to keep their plants running.

De La Rue could choose to quit the low-tech section of the banknote market where it faces the most competition.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Blick chief executive resigns after a year

IAN SCOTT-GALL, the chief executive of Blick, the electrical group, announced his resignation at a board meeting yesterday. He was appointed only in March last year. The company's recent disappointing performance was largely caused by the acquisition of Teletechnicom, the Dutch distribution company. Mr Scott-Gall is expected to receive a £300,000 payoff in respect of his two-year notice period. He is succeeded by Mark Aldridge, formerly a director of Hays, who, until 1993 had spent seven years also at BET.

The City reacted favourably to news of the departure of Mr Scott-Gall, who had served as a director of the group for 14 years. Shares rose 5p to 295p at yesterday's close, against a 12-month high of 352 1/2p.

Ushers heads for Italy

USHERS of Trowbridge is finding a ready market for its traditional draught ales in an unusual place - Italy. The company yesterday unveiled an agreement with a drinks marketing company in Bologna to develop sales of its ales and lagers. Roger North, chief executive, said: "English pub culture is becoming increasingly popular with more Italians going to English-style bars." The group also announced the acquisition of nine pubs for a total of £2.4 million, taking its estate to 538.

Lands Improvement falls

LANDS IMPROVEMENT, the owner and developer of rural land, saw a fall in pre-tax profits to £848,000 for the year to the end of December from last year's £3.2 million. In December, the group warned of farming losses and a provision against Loudon Castle Park. Earnings fell from 12.3p to 3.26p, and a final dividend of 3p makes an unchanged total of 4.75p. The company said it had a strong balance sheet and had refocused away from operating risk.

XCL results delayed

SHARES in XCL, the oil and gas exploration group based in Louisiana and quoted in London, tumbled 25 per cent to 215p yesterday after an announcement that the company had been unable to complete its annual audit because of delays in preparing a reserve report and would therefore be late in filing its annual report with the American Securities and Exchange Commission. The company warned that losses are likely to grow to \$14 million in 1997.

Hardy Underwriting up

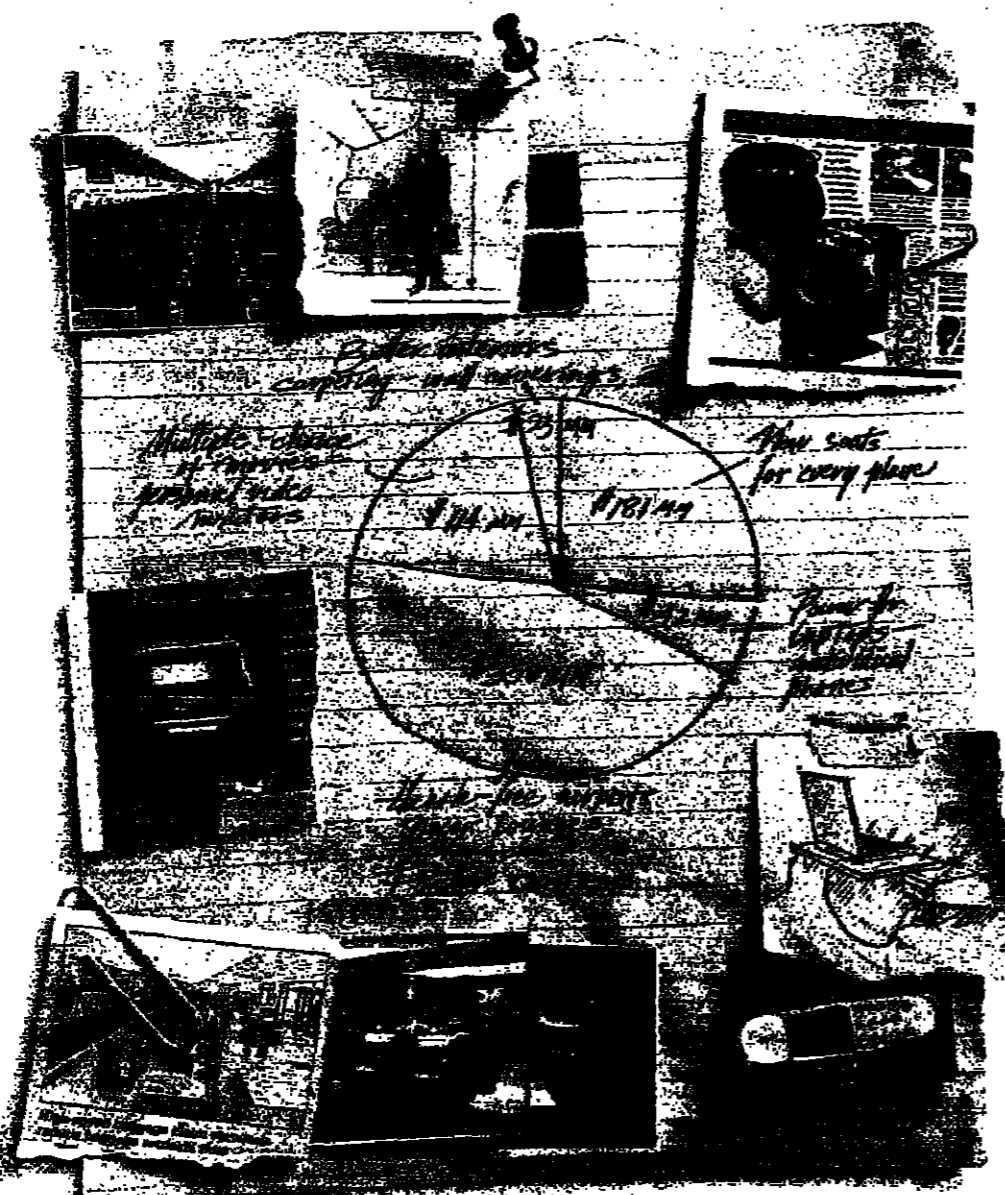
SHARES in Hardy Underwriting rose 5p to 150p yesterday after the group revealed a pre-tax profit of £2.23 million for the year to the end of December compared to a previous £290,000. Earnings rose from 6.11p to 20.8p out of which a total dividend of 6p will be paid (2p). Hardy reported record profits for the Lloyds 1995 underwriting year. For the 1996 year, it says Syndicate 382 is forecast to be well above the market average, and it expects 1997 to be profitable.

Asda buys shops park

ASDA PROPERTY has bought the Kingston Retail Park on Humberstone for £13 million through Sweetvale, the Asda joint venture with Harris Ventures, the property development business of Lord Harris. The park, due for completion in July, is expected to have an annual rent roll of £954,000 giving an initial yield of 7 per cent net. Leases have been agreed with Co-op HomeWorld, Boots and Petsmart. Asda Property also announced £9.55 million of disposals.

YOU'VE GOT \$710 MILLION TO IMPROVE THE LIFE OF THE BUSINESS TRAVELLER.

How do you spend it?

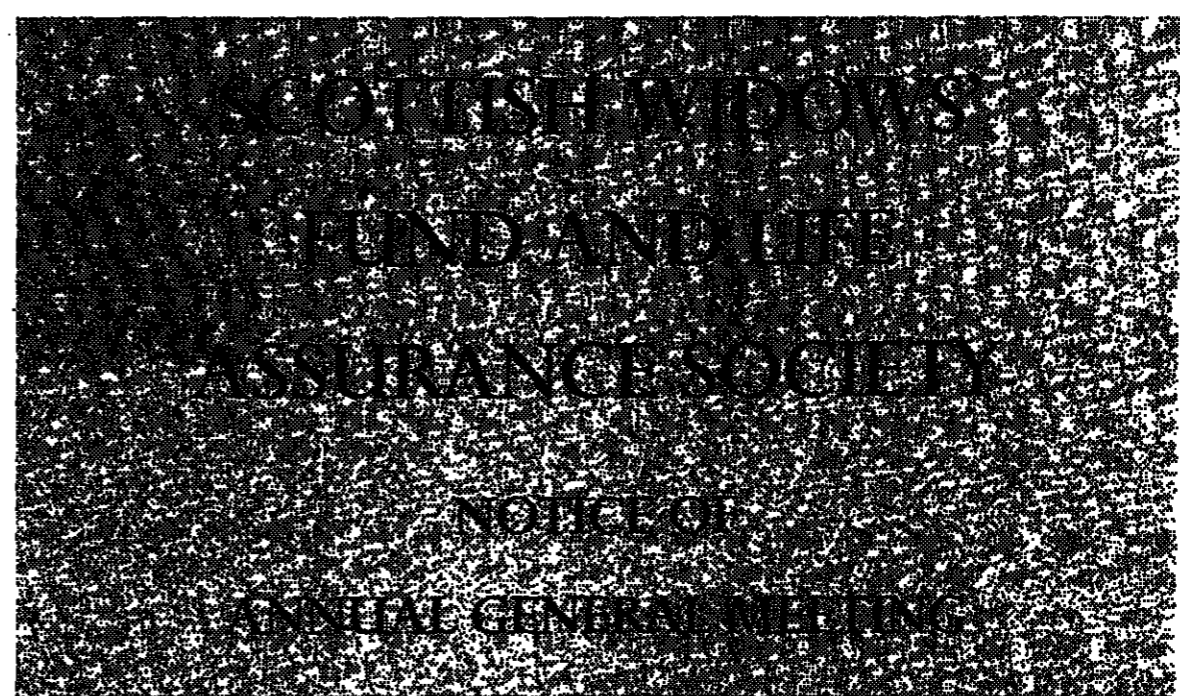


To give all our customers a piece of the pie, we're upgrading our seats, adding more entertainment options, installing laptop power outlets, and a whole lot more. It's the kind of thing we do for you every day at United. From the time you reach the airport to the time you get to your destination, \$710 million goes a long way towards making you a happier customer. Any way you slice it.

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Notice is hereby given that the 184th Annual General Meeting of the members of the Society will be held within The Edinburgh Suite, Sheraton Grand Hotel, 1 Festival Square Edinburgh EH3 9SR on Tuesday 5 May 1998 at 11.30am for the following purposes:

- To consider the Accounts and Balance Sheets for the year ended 31 December 1997 and the Reports of the Directors and Auditors.
- To elect or re-elect Directors.
- To fix the remuneration of Directors.
- To re-appoint Price Waterhouse as Auditors.
- To authorise the Directors to fix the remuneration of the Auditors for the current year.
- To transact any other ordinary business proper to an Annual General Meeting.

A member is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him or her. A proxy need not also be a member of the Society. To be effective, proxies (and the power of attorney or other authority, if any, under which it is signed, or a notarially certified copy of that power of authority) must reach the Society's principal office not less than two clear working days before the time for holding the Meeting. Members or proxies who intend to be present at the meeting should bring with them details of their policy numbers or in the case of proxies the policy numbers in respect of which they have been appointed proxy, and in all cases some means of identification. Registration will commence at 11.00am.

Iain A Reid LLB CA
Company Secretary
15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh EH16 5BU

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

2 April 1998

Issued by Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

Equities higher at close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table with columns: High, Low, Company, Price, % CHG, P/E

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Table listing stocks in the Alcoholic Beverages sector.

BANKS

Table listing stocks in the Banks sector.

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

Table listing stocks in the Breweries, Pubs & Rest sector.

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

Table listing stocks in the Diversified Industrials sector.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Table listing stocks in the Building Materials sector.

ELECTRICITY

Table listing stocks in the Electricity sector.

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

Table listing stocks in the Electronic & Elect sector.

CHEMICALS

Table listing stocks in the Chemicals sector.

ENGINEERING

Table listing stocks in the Engineering sector.

CONSTRUCTION

Table listing stocks in the Construction sector.

DISTRIBUTORS

Table listing stocks in the Distributors sector.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table listing investment trusts.

ENGINEERING VEHICLES

Table listing engineering vehicles.

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

Table listing food manufacturers.

HEALTHCARE

Table listing healthcare stocks.

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

Table listing household goods & text.

LEISURE & HOTELS

Table listing leisure & hotels.

OIL & GAS

Table listing oil & gas stocks.

BRITISH FUNDS

Table listing British funds.

SHORTS (under 5 years)

Table listing short-term investments.

INSURANCE

Table listing insurance stocks.

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

Table listing medium-term investments.

LONGS (over 15 years)

Table listing long-term investments.

UNDATED

Table listing undated investments.

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of

Table listing index-linked investments.

RETAILERS, GENERAL

Table listing general retailers.

OTHER FINANCIAL

Table listing other financial stocks.

PHARMACEUTICALS

Table listing pharmaceuticals.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Table listing support services.

PRINTING & PAPER

Table listing printing & paper.

PROPERTY

Table listing property stocks.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Table listing telecommunications.

TRANSPORT

Table listing transport stocks.

WATER

Table listing water stocks.

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

Table listing alternative investment market.

RETAILERS, FOOD

Table listing food retailers.

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

Table listing alternative investment market.

RETAILERS, GENERAL

Table listing general retailers.

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

Table listing alternative investment market.

RETAILERS, GENERAL

Table listing general retailers.

Advertisement for Compaq Planet Microsoft, featuring the text 'Everyone is talking about electronic commerce. We can deliver it.' and contact information.

Arabic text at the bottom center of the page.

Handwritten text in a box at the top center of the page.

Main table containing financial data for various unit trusts, including columns for fund names, prices, and other metrics.

Advertisement for Church's, featuring the text 'IN YOUR WALK OF LIFE' and 'Church's' logo, along with a list of addresses.

Vertical text on the left margin, including 'GENERAL', 'COMMUNIC', and 'TRANSPORT'.

Vertical text on the right margin, including 'WATER' and 'FURNITURE'.

DUSTIN HOFFMAN SHARON STONE SAMUEL L. JACKSON

FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF 'JURASSIC PARK' AND 'THE LOST WORLD'



Terror Can Fill Any Space.

SPHERE

12

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MICHAEL CRICHTON ANDREW WALD

BARRY LEVINSON

www.SPHERE-themovie.com

FROM TOMORROW AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



Lloyd Owen as obituarist Dan, Liza Walker as stripper Alice in Patrick Marber's witty and uncompromising dissection of mores in the Nineties

Multiple heart bypass

Larry, who is a doctor, and Dan, who writes obits for a newspaper, are having a verbal stag-battle. The journalist, maybe the chilliest character in a chilling play, mounts some platitudes about the complexities of love and the intricacies of the heart. "Ever seen a human heart?" comes back Larry. "It looks like a fist wrapped in blood." And that's exactly the way Patrick Marber feels about hearts or, more precisely, about the way we have defensively or aggressively distorted those organs in the 1990s.

When I first saw his Closer, it was at a matinee in the Cottesloe and some members of the audience clearly found such diagnostic accuracy upsetting, especially as it was

voiced in dialogue where the famous four-letter words were being flung about both literally and as insults.

"Worst thing I've ever seen," trumpeted a white-whiskered gentleman behind me when the interval arrived. Well, the play's transfer to the Lyttelton and now to the West End has proved its popularity; but I still would not recommend it to those with 19th-century hair. Others should gird themselves for what is as scathing a piece about contemporary sexual mores as our theatre has yet produced.

Actually, they will not find this an ordeal, for Marber has much in common with the Coward of Private Lives and the Schnitzler of La Ronde. He handles the sexual quadrille of Closer with wit and style and,

Closer

at best, much more. The dance gets pretty intricate, with Lloyd Owen's charming, self-absorbed Dan and Neil Pearson's tougher but more vulnerable Larry to-ing and fro-ing with Frances Barber's creamy, elegant Anna, who is a photographer, and Liza Walker's streetwise yet needy Alice, a stripper. But the scenes in which the journalist hoodwinks the doctor with dirty talk over the Internet, then lures him into an embarrassing encounter with Anna, are straightforwardly hilarious.

With line after line grabbing you with its tart incisiveness,

Closer could just be a smart, slick comedy. Well, I don't think Marber is the grieving elegist for lost love that some of my colleagues have suggested, but there is no doubting the moral thrust of his piece. Note his characters' professions. They are all, in some sense, in the voyeur business. They are always saying "talk to me" and not getting the response they wish. They all crave affection, or want to crave it, or think they want to crave it; but somehow they cannot avoid lies, manipulations, betrayals, cruelty, loneliness and, in the case of Pearson's Larry and Walker's wonderfully truculent yet damaged Alice, a certain despair.

Is there something sentimental about the very scenery, which brusquely whisks you

to an emergency ward, a trendy art gallery, an airport hotel, a lap-dancing club, yet keeps in place a backcloth derived from Postman's Park in Aldersgate, which is filled with tablets celebrating the heroism and self-sacrifice of ordinary people?

Are we meant to conclude that in the 100 years since that place's dedication, the country has succumbed to cynicism and bewilderment? Maybe. But Marber chronicles the forlorn swag, the desolate dash of our era so effectively that you overlook such glib contrasts.

It's the heart that matters and, yes, that's a pretty bloody fist.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

A reputation rightly restored

IT IS amazing how easily a small censorious snip can emasculate a "dangerous" gay play. A discovery by the biographer Geoffrey Wansell of an original version of Terence Rattigan's 1954 play Table No 7 (one half of the original double bill Separate Tables) has named a mild comedy about an eccentric bogus Major into a play that would have been exceedingly risqué for its time. It is a significant coup for the director Colin Ellwood and the King's Head theatre.

The crucial difference between the two versions is simply a page of dialogue that was altered to change the nature of the Major's offence: instead of being bound over for touching up strange women in a Bournemouth cinema, the original scripted offence was importuning young men on the Esplanade. If Rattigan had defied the Lord Chancellor to present the play in its original form his "safe" reputation would have been restored.

It is this knowledge that gives Ellwood's double bill of Rattigan shorts the heady atmosphere of an awfully big adventure. Suddenly the hysteria of Table No 7 makes far more sense in Julie Godfrey's stifling hotel lounge. Barbara Jefford's Mrs. Railton Bell, stuffed full of towering scorn, leads the attack to oust the

Separate Tables

exposed Major by securing the prejudices of Oliver Bradshaw's crusty Mr. Fowler, Sheila Reid's mousey Lady Matheson, and her captive daughter Sybil (Lucy Whybrow). It is comic, quaint and moving in equal parts. With his slightly too light tweed suit and his hair scraped over his bald patch, Barry Wallman's suave Major strikes all the right duff notes as a man who has spent most of his life taking refuge behind pretence. Harlequinade, the comedy that precedes Table No 7, cleverly sets up the latter with a light-hearted look at whether theatre has a "social purpose". "Why couldn't they have turned up when I was playing Lear?" demands Arthur Gosport when his bigamous past catches up with him while playing Romeo in Brackley. Hopefully hantmy and middle-aged, Mark Eden's Arthur and his "wife", Diana Hardcastle's Edna, float about in silk dressing gowns, sublimely unaware of anything but themselves and their art.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Ripe for the reaping

MEDIEVAL woodcuts of the dance of death generally include a conga of prancing worthies led by a skeleton and disappearing over the skyline into their graves.

Given the fatalism of the medieval mind, the grave would almost certainly mean Hell. But Strindberg's characters seldom have to wait for death to find themselves in a hell of their own making, and curiously, much as the figure of Death was given to flashes of grim humour, so do Strindberg's frightful Captain and his almost-as-frightful wife pursue their vendetta with a gleeful, sardonic relish.

If Nicolas Kent's production achieves a sort of balance between the ferocious and the farcical, this occurs because the cast seldom venture far from a middle line where nothing matters much. Yes, it matters to Edgar and Alice, bound together for 25 years of marital hell, each bent on undermining the other's treachery in the battle for domination. But it never mattered to me or, I suspect, to those others in the audience who giggled in disbelief - in contrast to the gulps of shocked acceptance that I recall from a previous production.

This version of the text has been restyled by the Irish writer Carlo Gebler to a small island off the coast of Donegal. Here Captain Edgar Dawson is in charge of a

Dance of Death

British Army garrison on the eve of the First World War, and the entire action occurs inside some sort of Martello tower.

One peculiar quality of the play is that Strindberg makes the man more vindictive than the wife, and when her cousin and sometime admirer returns from abroad, his presence spurs Edgar to master-strokes of malevolence. But it is characteristic that a woman, the daughter, should ruin his schemes in the end and bring on the fatal stroke.

Gebler's Irish resettlement works well for Part 1 but in Part 2 (less often staged, and dashed off by Strindberg after somebody ventured to tell him the first part was too despairing). Gebler makes the events coincide with the 1916 Easter Rising. This is presumably to add another humiliation to the cousin,

here named Conor, but spreading the catarract of woes sideways dilutes the force of individual flows.

More serious damage is caused by the passages of empty rhetoric, notably "Is this a man?" several times asked by Conor, a character Tim Woodward is required to play as just too docile a sheep.

Marion Bailey's Alice smooths a jerky delivery for her crafty scene with some handkerchiefs, and certainly holds our attention when pulling at her dying husband's tongue in an ecstasy of triumph. Michael Cochrane's Alfred has the features of a querulous Harold Macmillan, collapsing into those of Father Jack when the fies come upon him. He glitters with hatred in his moments of triumph, but the script's failure to present him with sturdy opposition weakens the conflict and carries the enterprise down several notches into mere play-acting.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Lady wrestles with age

TELEVISION may rot the brain, and live performance be the glory of glories, but for wannabe theatregoers outside the big cities the option of popping out to see a spot of challenging new drama is rarely there. The importance of good touring work is starting to be recognised again: many of the major companies now tour. But the smaller venues are still missing out. The smaller theatres take a great financial risk in booking unseen or experimental work, and it is difficult to lure ambitious performers out of London or Glasgow, as a result the shows on offer have been frustratingly poor.

After years of griping, 18 regional venues have decided to take the matter into their own hands and form their own production company, Network. The theatres all share the administration and the financial risk: in return they want to create some touring shows that they can be proud of, or at least promote

Trafford Tanzi

with conviction and make a bit of cash on. Their pilot project is Trafford Tanzi, directed by Fern Smith of the acclaimed physical theatre company Volcano. Written by Claire Luckman, the show was first performed in the late 1970s and the role of Tanzi was made famous by Toyah Wilcox in the early 1980s. Chronicling the life and hard knocks of a champion female wrestler, the story is a simple tale of one woman fighting for control of her life. The action is set inside a wrestling ring, as Tanzi takes on her parents, schoolfriend and husband at various stages of her life.

Physically, it is an exceptionally taxing role for an actress, and the decision to cast Diane Youdale, better known as Jet from the Gladiators - in the central role is not

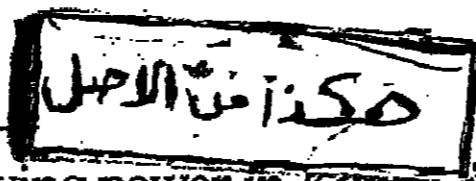
as daft as it may sound. She makes a very convincing wrestler and is no doubt a great pull. Indeed, in crowd-pleasing terms, the show has it all: wrestling, stripping, singing, dancing, blondes on roller skates. All it really lacks is narrative complexity.

In physical terms, the cast are on top form. The choreography is extremely tight and the fight scenes convincingly painful. But the text does not come out well. With such stylised movement, there was clearly a problem about how to pitch the dialogue, and it has ended up floundering in the hinterland between pantomime and hysteria. It is not the easiest text to work with, however, and in general Trafford Tanzi has aged rather badly as a play. Fern Smith has attempted to update areas, but beyond the central conceit of the beautifully designed wrestling ring set, the show still has very little to offer.

HETTIE JUDAH

Advertisement for the play 'Kurdun'. It features a black and white photo of a young boy. Text includes: "Mesmerisingly beautiful and intricately detailed visual poem - Scorsese is not just a master, but the master." and "A work of beauty and restraint". At the bottom: "FROM TOMORROW IN THE WEST END AND AT SELECTED CINEMAS APRIL 10".

كندا من الأصل



NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown finds genuine staying power in *Kundun*, the story of the Dalai Lama from birth to exile

Scorsese puts art where his heart is

So where are we going? Up into Tibet with Martin Scorsese and the Dalai Lama, or down to the ocean floor with Sharon Stone? Or perhaps you fancy escorting a church built of glass to a remote spot in Australia, or banding a mouse, or beekeeping down in Florida? This week in the cinema everything can be arranged.

Tibet takes pride of place. *Kundun*, the story of the early life of the Dalai Lama, from childhood to exile, begins with a shot of a mountain top shrouded in snow and mist. No mean streets. No wiseguys. No ballets of blood. This is Scorsese in austere mode, communing with Buddhist teachings and the strivings of mankind through the simplest of stories and the fewest words possible. This is a story told in images and sounds: images of feet crossing stones on the water's edge, of vultures waiting to pounce on human innards, of sand paintings brushed aside with a sweep of the hand; sounds of ceremonial *kyines*, Tibetan horns and cymbals, and the arpeggios of the composer Philip Glass, swirling round the soundtrack like incense.

Melissa Mathison, the writer of *E.T.*, first conceived the notion of a film about the 14th Dalai Lama and his conflict with communist China. But only a director of Scorsese's power, skill and ambition could have mounted her script with such pictorial splendour and sweeping disregard for commercial formulae. Seven years in Tibet, which touched on some of the same topics, dangled Brad Pitt before the audience. *Kundun*, produced by the Walt Disney empire, dances Tenzin Thudob Tsarong and other exiled Tibetans. (The film itself was largely shot in Morocco.) As for the story, Scorsese himself cannot make it sound gripping. As he said on these pages on Tuesday, "The Dalai Lama grows up, he's told there'll be trouble and he gets away. That's it!"

That's it? Not quite. For Roger Deakins's radiant camerawork and the subtle editing of Thelma Schoonmaker constantly guide us towards tiny details. A rat drinks from an altar bowl. The Dalai Lama discovers cinema, and notes the oddity of Mao's shiny black shoes. His dead father receives a Buddhist burial, torn to bits for the waiting vultures. Nothing comes pinned with a wordy sermon. We must work out the significance ourselves as the reincarnated Buddha of Compassion is discovered at the age of two, tutored, enlightened and brought face to face with Chairman Mao, who believes religion is poison. Scorsese's unusually reserved approach brings some problems, especially when the

- Kundun**
Curzon Mayfair
12, 140 mins
Scorsese contemplates the Dalai Lama
- Sphere**
Warner West End
12, 133 mins
Daft but enjoyable sci-fi
- Oscar and Lucinda**
Odeon Haymarket
15, 131 mins
Peter Carey's novel defies the cameras
- MouseHunt**
Empire, PG, 98 mins
Wacky slapstick comedy
- Ulee's Gold**
Curzon West End
15, 111 mins
A trite situation needlessly caressed
- Telling Lies in America**
Odeon Mezzanine
15, 101 mins
Mild tale of young love and rock'n'roll
- Out of the Past**
National Film Theatre
97 mins
Glorious revival of the film noir classic

storyline fades near to vanishing point, or the baldness of the characterisations is revealed (look at Robert Lin's camp Mao). At such times the images beguile, but scarcely enthrall, and little spiritual uplift is gained.

Then the triumphant home stretch is reached. After years spent fending off Mao's blandishments and threats, the Dalai Lama agrees to his advisers' urgings and begins the exhausting trek into exile. Glass's score finally develops a sustaining power, supporting and cradling Scorsese's images. A film that had seemed at best contemplative, at worst static, now advances with the sweep and passion of the best silent cinema. *Kundun* may never generate big bucks, but it is beautiful and singular enough to live on.

With *Sphere*, adapted from Michael Crichton's novel, we swing from the sublime to the ridiculous. Sharon Stone, Dustin Hoffman and Samuel L. Jackson sit on the ocean floor, trying to fathom the whys and wherefores of an alien intelligence found in a spacecraft 300 years old. "Hello, how are you?" it tells its visitors. "My name is Jerry."

Stone starts off particularly badly, cast as a biochemist with a brusque haircut and lines like "Oh ... my ... God!". Hoffman offers some amusement as a hesitant psychologist, hauled on to the



"No mean streets. No wiseguys. This is Scorsese communing with the strivings of mankind through the simplest of stories": Tuiku Jamyang Kunga Tenzin plays the Dalai Lama at five

research team after writing a fanciful report on ways of handling extra-terrestrials. Jackson, a sparky mathematician, completes the trio, stealing scenes by going bananas. Everyone, though, goes bananas in some way. This is the plot's point: that sphere type find in the ancient spacecraft has the gift of visualising a person's fears, generating galloping paranoia. The director is also not quite himself. He is Barry Levinson, encountered just a few weeks back with the wickedly funny *Wag the Dog*. As expected, the director of *Diner* emphasises dialogue more than special effects, but from this silly, half-way endeavoring folly it is still hard to see why he had such an itch to make a science fiction movie.

From the depths of the Pacific we emerge to find *Oscar and Lucinda*, adapted from Peter Carey's novel by the Australian film-maker Gillian Armstrong. Carey's prizewinning novel offers an intricate landscape of Victorian social history and passions sacred and profane. Water and glass metaphors dominate and they merge in the symbol of the church of glass, hauled by Oscar, the defrocked Anglican minister and compulsive gambler, to a remote spot in northern Australia. A writer can create a glass church with a few taps on a keyboard. A film-maker must build the thing at significant cost, and manoeuvre it down roads and rivers. Throughout this film, so striking in looks, so muffled in impact, you can feel the strain of making words visible, and creating characters round enough for

our sympathy. Some of the film's troubles lie in the casting. Cate Blanchett, previously featured in *Paradise Road*, captures well enough the gauche and feisty spirit of Lucinda Lepastrier, the young heiress and glass factory owner who crosses Oscar's path. But a question mark hangs over Ralph Fiennes. Technically, his performance is extremely skilful. The end result, though, is a creation so cold to the touch that you shrink in distaste. Something serious is missing from this movie — a soul, a point, or an audience. *MouseHunt* should have no problem attracting the crowds. Children will relish the idea of a rodent *Home Alone* set in a large, dilapidated house whose resident, dubbed "Hitler with a tail", does not take kindly to renovations. Adults will appreciate the jokes, the drive of Gore Verbinski's direction and the echoes of Laurel and Hardy in the double-act of Nathan Lane and Lee Evans as two brothers who inherit, along with the house, a factory for making string.

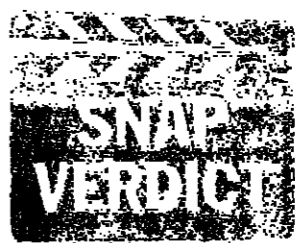
Peter Fonda's business in *Ulee's Gold* is keeping bees in the Florida marshes. He also keeps busy staying taciturn and acting on one note (how did he ever win an Oscar nomination?). Ulee's life gets a shake-up when his son's criminal associates turn nasty and his daughter-in-law takes one drug too many. Victor Nunez's film is sensitively handled, but the basic material is too tired to deserve his loving care. Disappointment also arises with *Telling Lies in America* (directed by Guy Ferland), a lightweight drama inspired by

the screenwriter Joe Eszterhas's early days in Cleveland, Ohio. Brad Renfro plays his teenage surrogate in 1960, the son of Hungarian immigrants, kicked out of school, awkward in love, under the spell of a dubious disc jockey (Kevin Bacon). Surely something more exciting than this happened to the author of *Basic Instinct*? Still, Robert Mitchum is up to scratch in *Out of the Past*, encased in a trenchcoat, up to his neck in double-crosses, revenge and Jane Greer's femme fatale. Jacques Tourneur's 1947 classic boasts bold images, acidic dialogue and enough film noir spirit to intoxicate connoisseurs.

Complex sci-fi

Every week, young film fans discuss some of the latest releases...

MOUSEHUNT
Dom: A film full of laughs, action and thrills. The mouse is excellent.
Leslie: Lee Evans and Nathan Lane are both great but the star of the movie is definitely the mouse.
Emma: A good comedy with a better script it could have been a classic.
Sarah: Parents beware. The demand for mice as pets is about to rocket.
OSCAR AND LUCINDA
Dom: A worthy but not very entertaining film. Cinema for



the discerning.
Leslie: Worth seeing for the quality of acting alone.
Emma: Ralph Fiennes has never been better, although whoever dyed his hair should be sacked.
Sarah: I wasn't grabbed by the story, but it's visually pleasing and Fiennes and Cate Blanchett are fantastic.

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ULEE'S GOLD

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NEW ON VIDEO

8 HEADS IN A DUFFEL BAG
VCI, 15, 1997
THE title is fun at least, and the plot shows promise: a bag of severed heads en route to a mobster get mixed up with the luggage of a holidaying medical student. But with Joe Pesci squawking as the mobster, and limp direction by Tom Schulman, the black comedy is nowhere near as funny as it should be. Other cast members include Kristy Swanson, David Spade and George Hamilton — unusually amusing as an uptight father who gets killed off far too soon. Available to rent.

THE NORTH STAR
Burek, 12, 1943
A FASCINATING relic, written by Lillian Hellman, from the days when Russia was America's wartime ally and Hollywood mobilised its public relations skills to present Russians as cuddly, homely, balalaika-strumming types fighting an heroic battle against Nazi invaders. Since every Russian is played by stalwart Americans such as Walter Huston and Dean Jagger, realism takes a back seat. But the sheer professionalism of director Lewis Milestone and his crew, and the music of Aaron Copland, keep the film absorbing. And who can forget Erich von Stroheim's surgeon, draining away blood from Russian

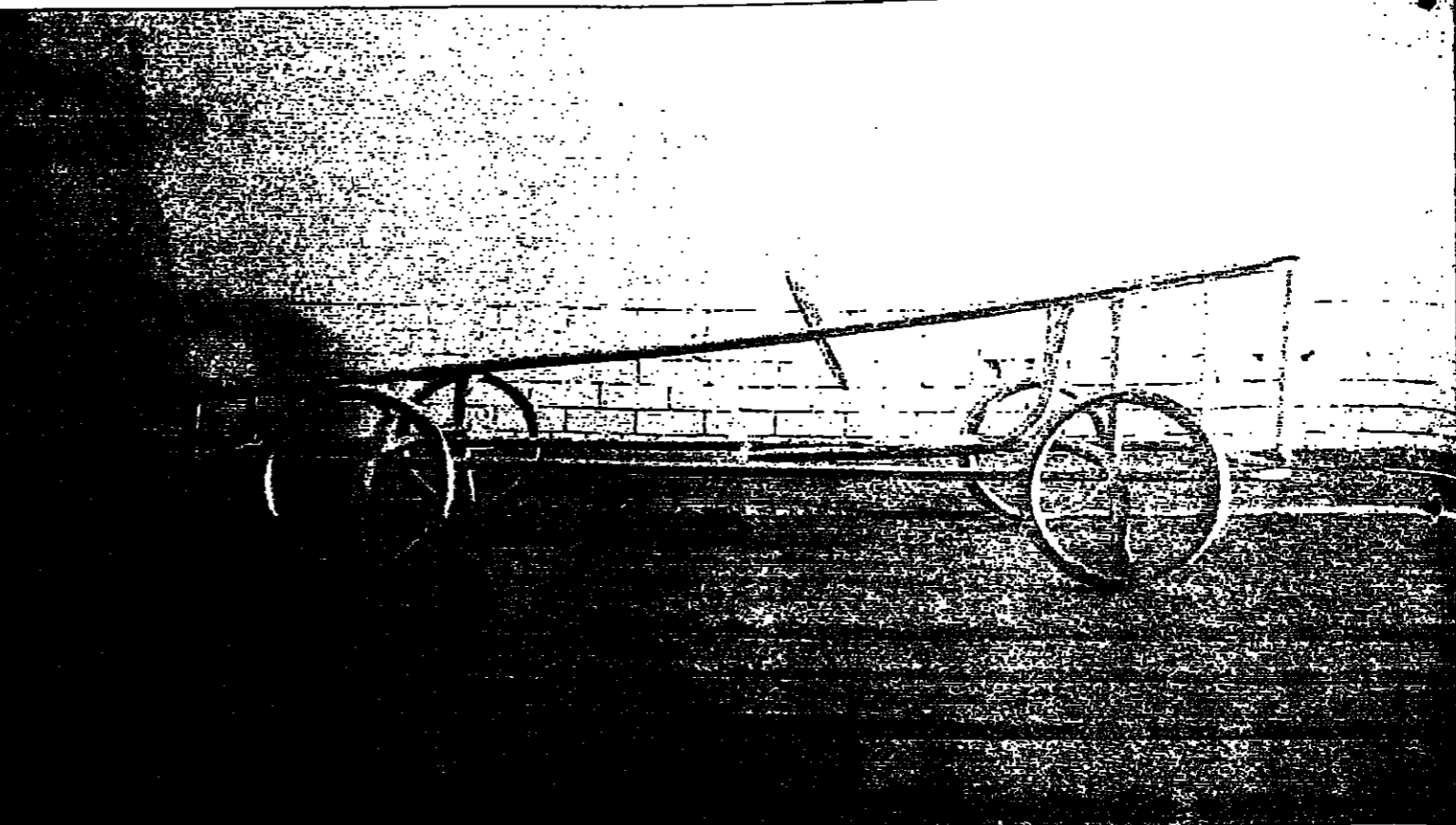
children to top up German casualties?

SMILLA'S FEELING FOR SNOW
Fox Pathé, 15, 1996
SMILLA, a Danish scientist of Greenlandic descent, turns detective and sniffs out a murder mystery in a young boy's suspicious fall from a high roof. Peter Hoeg's original novel offers intriguing material, but a multinational cast, under director Bille August, seriously damages the atmosphere, and silliness engulfs the finale. Julia Ormond tries hard as the prickly heroine with a frozen heart who is torn between two cultures: Gabriel Byrne and Richard Harris also feature as two mystery men dogging her steps. Available to rent.

TEMPRESS MOON
Artificial Eye, 15, 1996
CHEN KAIGE'S complex, atmospheric period drama about a gigolo's obsession with the daughter of a decaying, opium-drenched aristocratic family. This lacks the potency of Chen's big success *Farewell My Concubine*, but there are still luscious visuals, a splendid recreation of Shanghai in the 1920s and two major Hong Kong stars to enjoy (Leslie Cheung and Gong Li). Available to rent and buy.

Geoff Brown

Isabel Carlisle casts a discriminating eye over the sprawling Whitechapel Open



Lucy Wood's *Fatal Entrapment*, now at the Tannery: a playground toy for fantasy races, implies that beguiling thrills can end in disaster

East Enders on parade

The very best of contemporary art gives us what we didn't know we wanted. So when we find it we are jolted by a shock of recognition. There is a moment in which a door swings open to readmit some past sensation or take us to a state of mind to which our imaginations alone could never have carried us.

of radical intervention by the artist Jordan Baseman. There is also a dominance of painting, drawing and photography over sculpture. The selectors have made too much of mock-crude painting (especially portraits) but there are some good painters, if not many surprises.

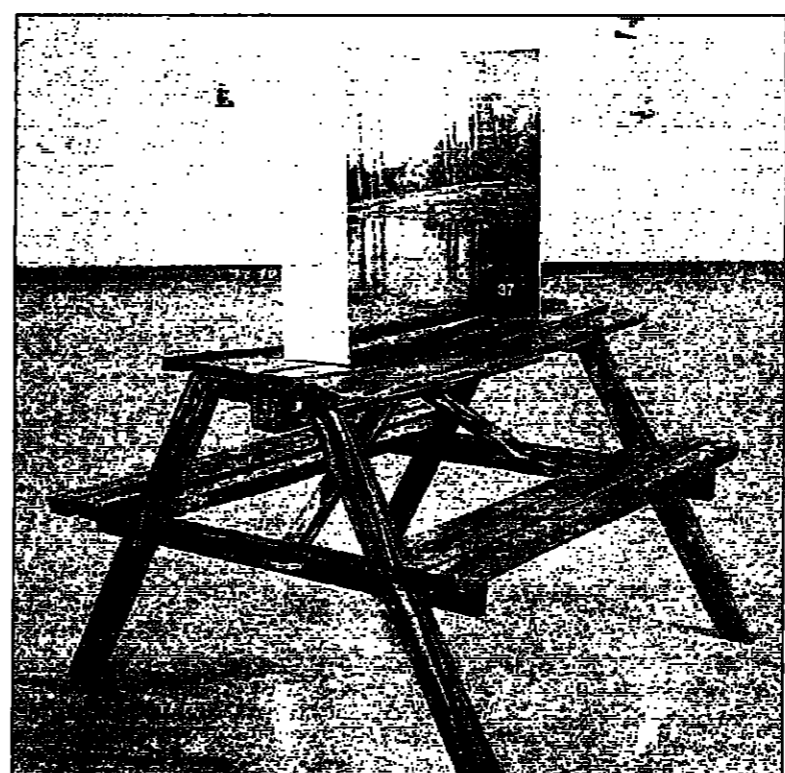
Nicky Hoberman, for example, is collected by Charles Saatchi. She paints little girls with heads enlarged by photographic distortion and knowing eyes. They are both cute and freaky and in *My Precious* the girls are seen surrounded by a litter of Labrador puppies against a background that shifts from turquoise to pale blue, teetering on the edge of kitsch.

Also at the Tannery, Lucy Wood's *Fatal Entrapment* is the tubular zinc-plated steel outline of a racing car. Looking like a playground toy for fantasy races, it implies that beguiling thrills can end in disaster.

Alex Landrum also invokes a car accident with a shiny surface of paint on crumpled, moulded green resin.

That there should be a perverse beauty in the random shaping caused by impact in *Perfect Accident* leaves you wondering uneasily about the human lives that might have been involved.

At the Whitechapel Art Gallery I could have done without the column of dog-food, presented on a white tile and called *Unheimlich* (Uncanny). But I was entranced for five minutes by Holly Davey's *Fairy Vision*, a video camera projecting a two-inch high image of a tiny, twirling figure onto the skirting board.



Phillip Allen's *Good for You*, at Canary Wharf: an idyllic river scene in plywood, balanced on a picnic bench made out of cardboard

One exception is the work by Jaime Patach. It includes a series of four black-and-white photos of burnt match-heads that look like disintegrating skulls, a chair balanced on one leg, a model train that has come to a halt at a right-angle corner on a square-shaped track. They have the panache that rises above the miasma of self-doubt that hangs around much of the Whitechapel Open.

The Whitechapel Open and Open Studios until May 31 at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London E1 (01753 2222 7888); The Tannery, St. Bernard's St, SE1 (0171-24 0587); Canary Wharf (0171-418 5783).

LONDON

BEEN SO LONG: Roxana Sibert directs Che Walker's play about love and revenge in masked garden. Royal Court Upstairs (Ambassadors), West Street, WC2 (0171-995 5000). Preview from tonight, 7.45pm. Opens April 7 and 8, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat Sat, 4pm.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

symphonies of the Drumroll and the London Sinfonia. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2 (0171-3099 3019). Tonight, 7.45pm.



Adam Cooper debuts with Scottish Ballet

powerful score based on the original Offenbach opera. Theatre Royal, Hope Street (0141-332 9000). Opera tonight, 7.15pm.

LONDON GALLERIES British Museum Islamic and Indian Paintings from the Collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan (0171-323 8529). Dulwich Picture Gallery (0181-853 8524). Goethe Institute: Berlin Photographs by Gerhard Ullmann (0171-594 0214). Hayward Gallery: *Inter-Session* (0171-633 3144). Museum of London: *The Life and Times of M. M. Frohman* (0171-71936 (0171-600 0807)). National Anthony Caro (0171-747 2388). Maritime Museum: *The Great in England, 1698* (0181-312 6745).

ART

ART: Roger Allam, Mick Ford and Jack Dee in this occasionally interesting drama about friendship, unrequited romance and an almost all-white painting. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1738). Tue-Sat, 8pm. Tues Wed, 3pm, Sat and Sun, 5pm.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London. House full, returns only. Some seats available. Seats at all prices.

THE SURGEON OF HONOUR

Calderon's dark drama of fear, cruelty and the obsession with honour. Riverside Theatre, Playhouse, 62 Southwark Bridge Road, SE1 (0171-820 3448). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm. Until April 4.

NEW RELEASES

ANASTASIA (U) Fairy-tale adventures of the forgotten princess. Moderate family cartoon in the Disney style, with the voices of Meg Ryan and John Cusack. Odeon Leicester Sq (0161-515 4215).

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of film showing in London and where indicated with the symbol (●) on release across the country.

LONG RUNNERS

Blood Brothers: *Brothers* (0171-369 1234). *Las Vegas* (0171-494 5080). *Las Vegas* (0171-494 5080). *Las Vegas* (0171-494 5080).

SEPARATE TABLES

Harlequinade: *Tenace* (0171-258 3053). *Harlequinade* (0171-258 3053).

THE WOMAN IN BLACK

Adapted by Stephen Mallat. "The most thrilling and chilling play for years". D.Mat. Mon-Sat 8.15. Tue-Sat 8.15. Sun 8.15. Running time 2hrs.

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Opera & Ballet listings including Coliseum, Royal Opera House, and various theatres.

Theatres listings including Apollo, Comedy, Inspector Hound, and various plays.

Comedy listings including The Real, Inspector Hound, and various comedies.

Duchess, Haymarket, and other theatre listings.

New London, Prince of Wales, and other theatre listings.

Shakespeare Theatre, Strand Theatre, and other listings.

Records at Cost and CD Warehouse advertisements.

298,000 readers of this section go to the theatre at least once every 2/3 months. Advertisements for theatre companies.

Fox goes to work in the Bullring

For its new production of Janáček's opera, City of Birmingham Touring Opera is using a literal translation of the Czech title rather than the "Cunning Little Vixen" which comes to us via Max Brod's German version. I hope the original sticks; I know it doesn't trip off the tongue, but neither does the Czech: *Přihody Lisky Bystrouška*.

The Adventures of Vixen Sharp-Ears Birmingham

pragmatism or a certain puritanism, there is nothing of the forest in Vick's purposefully urban production. Robin Don's permanent set is a suburban lounge in front of a brick wall. The cast assembles in the prelude, and there is a sense of "say, we could do the opera right here in our living room". Vixen and Fox are punk New Age travellers, and there's an almost Becken-like severity to the action as well as busyness and slightly self-conscious sordidness.



Lisa Tyrrell (Vixen) giving birth to cubs in Graham Vick's City of Birmingham Touring Opera production of Janáček's masterpiece in Birmingham Bullring's Mayfair Suite

— and the Dog is, literally, a Boxer. But Janáček's vision is essentially life-enhancing while Vick's seems marginally less so. In addition to Newman, there's an outstanding performance from Linda Hubbard as the Innkeeper's Wife: her line about the eel's Parson, "he wrote, once", was heart-rending. Adele Clark's baby Vixen is a little star of Shirley Temple dimensions. The rest, many doubling, tripling and quadrupling roles, both work hard and slightly too hard, and could all — especially Lisa Tyrrell's lively Vixen — sharpen their diction and "sing" less.

RODNEY MILNES

Puck the Dalek wrecks the spell

Richard Hickox's well-planned *Midsummer Night's Dream* sequence with the City of London Sinfonia began a fortnight ago with Mendelssohn's incidental music and ended on Tuesday with a glittering performance of Benjamin Britten's opera.

on the platform, where the gentry were carefully ranged to the right and the mechanics to the left. Few know more about the *Dream* than the Oberon of James Bowman and the Tytania of Lillian Watson. His counter-tenor still has the ethereal, other-worldly timbre of the King of the Fairies, flecked with an all too human irritability when his orders go wrong. Watson has spent so long among the Despinaes of this world that her Tytania serves as a sharp reminder of how true and silvery her

A Midsummer Night's Dream Barbican

coloratura still is — as trim as her figure poured into the evening's most eye-catching dress. Bottom will surely remember his forest night with her. Donald Maxwell is one of Hickox's favourite singers and his extrovert, good-humoured weaver, beautifully articulated and majestically

sung, was one of the evening's great pleasures. Hickox let the orchestra bray with delight as Bottom entered his donkey paradise. The four quarrelsome Athenians were played with high spirit by Mark Padmore (especially good), Stephen Varcoe, Pamela Helen Stephens and Catrin Wyn Davies. There was another highly distinguished contribution from the Trinity Boys Choir, both individually and together. Britten entrusted the elves to keep the close of the first two acts firmly rooted in

fairlyland and Trinity made sure of that. The one miscalculation was the casting of Puck in the all-too Earthbound figure of Sylvester McCoy, a plump middle-aged servant who did not so much fly through the air as roll around the platform. His grating voice sounded as though it had a little mechanical enmeshment, but the main surprise was that Bowman's imperious Oberon would have any truck with so vulgar a Puck.

JOHN HIGGINS

Play that funky music, blues boy

Clive Davis meets a former Miles Davis protégé with a roving brief to fuse musical idioms — even classical

He is the pupil who outgrew his master. Of all the musicians who passed through Miles Davis's band in the trumpeter's erratic final decade, it is John Scofield whom the Prince of Darkness's fans tend to recall with the most affection. Davis does not have much to say about the guitarist in his autobiography — which is just as well, considering some of the comments he made about his ex-players (and, worse still, his ex-wives) in that scabrous tome. Scofield, as I recall, does not even merit the particular obscenity that Davis regularly flourished as both insult and term of endearment, depending on his mood.

authority of Scofield's playing, even though he admits to having been intimidated by the demands of interpreting a score. While there are improvised passages in *Blood on the Floor*, the rest is what some

Scofield will be on more familiar turf later this month when he returns to the South Bank with his own band, a unit which strikes a fine balance between a funk bass and intelligent improvisation. His affection for the unpredictable riffs of soul-jazz has long been apparent in albums such as *Blue Matter*.

Over the past few years, the funk quotient has steadily increased. He takes another step down that path on his new Verve album *A Go Go*, which finds him in the company of the American organ-percussion-and-bass trio of John Medeski, Billy Martin and Chris Wood.

Impressed with the threesome's approach ("It was a kind of loose funk with a jazz attitude," he explains), Scofield decided to make contact by the highly unorthodox method of leaving a message on their telephone fan-line. Not surprisingly, his putative collaborators thought at first that it was a hoax call.



Swingin' little guitar man: bandleader John Scofield

Medeski, Martin and Wood will not be joining him at his QEH concert; instead he will lead a quartet featuring his regular partner, the organ player Larry Goldings. But more dates with MMSW nonetheless remain a possibility. "We did five loft gigs before we recorded the album, and I hope we can repeat that," Scofield says. "It was a nice

thing to do, just to play music for music's sake." **John Scofield tours with Blood on the Floor at the Corn Exchange, Cambridge, Sun 5; QEH, London SE1, Mon 6; Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, Tue 7; Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 8. The John Scofield Band performs at the Cheltenham Jazz Festival, Sun 10; Band On The Wall, Manchester, Mon 21; Irish Centre, Leeds, Tue 21; QEH, London SE1, Wed 22.**

Rarities go unheard

Probably not since he exiled himself to Siberia with a proscribed Schmittke symphony has Gennadi Rozhdestvensky seen such bleak empty spaces. As his eye wandered over the uninhabited wastes of the Bridgewater Hall, where scarcely another human being was to be seen, he must have wondered what was the point of exposing himself to the Manchester climate at such an apathetic extreme.

He was not depressed, however. On the contrary, within two hours he had so warmed to the place that he was conducting the last bar of Strauss's *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme* with his back to the orchestra and eliciting so much applause from the auditorium as to demonstrate that there is life even in these conditions. In fact, it had been a performance to melt the permafrost, abundant in charm, wit and the sort of sentiment that is irresistible to an ear susceptible to elegantly

rather than turn it away with Charles Avison. His concerto grosso arrangement of keyboard music by Scarlatti froze before it touched the ground. If the Spohr was more interesting than rewarding — an enterprisingly atmospheric slow introduction is followed by a conventional Allegro — the Casken was remarkably successful. The Northern Sinfonia's principal cellist, Emma-Jane Murphy, is not as experienced a soloist as Heinrich Schiff, for whom Casken wrote the Concerto seven years ago, but she plays with uncommon integrity and conviction. So while the composer complicates matters as he develops his increasingly elusive material in the opening movement, she holds the attention and prepares it to be shaken up by the brilliant first part of the second movement and pacified by the lyrical beauty of the ending.

CONCERTS Northern Sinfonia Manchester

turned and sensitively coloured melody. While it is difficult to imagine any ensemble other than the Northern Sinfonia responding so generously and so spontaneously to Rozhdestvensky's rarely predictable interpretative impulse, it must share some responsibility for the empty hall. Apart from the fact that the Sinfonia has no profile in the northwest, there was an obvious miscalculation in the programme. By all means bring an interesting rarity like Spohr's *Macbeth* overture and give the audience an opportunity to catch up with John Casken's Cello Concerto. But in these circumstances, it is wise to seduce the eye with a name like Tchaikovsky or Elgar at the top of the programme.

GERALD LARNER

You'll believe a band can fly

SUPERMAN has landed on the South Bank. Not to be outdone by the Barbican, the Festival Hall has been trying its own hand at inventing America, thanks to an excitingly programmed BBC Sym-

phony Orchestra concert whose grand finale was the UK premiere of a symphony celebrating the 50th anniversary of Superman's appearance in American comics.

Michael Daugherty's *Metropolis Symphony*, together with this decade's glut of American Pastorals, Underworlds and Wobegon Boys, is another resonant manifestation of acute New World self-awareness at yet another *fin de siècle*. Earlier works like *Le Tombeau de Libération* and the opera *Jackie O* have already revealed Daugherty a master icon-maker. Here he sets out to express "the energies, ambiguities, paradoxes and wit" of American urban culture within five movement-images: *Lex, Krypton, Myzptik, Oh, Lois and Red Cape Tango*.

Superman aficionados will get the point at once; but for those who aren't and don't, little is lost. For this is a real *Symphonie Fantastique* for our times, its restless spirit poised between Hollywood and Faust, its language both celebrating and sending up our century's musical Babel. Although each movement may be performed separately, a diabolic solo violin is a ubiquitous and regenerating spirit, the prime mover in the *moto perpetuo* of the super-villain Lex, and the ghost within the machine of the mighty concluding *Dies irae Tango*. This last movement, as Enrique Diemecke, conductor,

BBCSO/Diemecke Festival Hall

ing, so deftly showed, is the apotheosis of another virtuoso Daugherty conjuring trick: his play with space and time. Throughout the symphony, rhythms overlap, collide, and reinvent themselves as sound appears to travel across the stage at the speed of light. In *Lex*, referee whistles shriek from every corner; in *Krypton*, sirens and firebells join orchestral *glissandi* in an apocalyptic apocalypse.

Daugherty's maverick imagination, fearless structural sense and meticulous ear made powerfully economic use of a vast orchestra which had already been assembled for another icon-maker, Leonard Bernstein. His only full-length movie score, *On the Waterfront*, was heard, condensed into its symphonic suite, at the start of the evening. And after the tense blood-beat of the New York underworld, it was time for the rocking chair on the verandah, Roberta Alexander gave a sensitive, if sometimes strained, performance of Samuel Barber's eternally evocative *James Agee* setting *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. This last movement, as Enrique Diemecke, conductor,

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Overly English Mascagni; Mahler Rattled; bubbling Mendelssohn

OPERA John Higgins

MASCAGNI *Cavalleria rusticana* Miricioiu/O'Neill/Joil/LPO/Parry Chandos CHAN 3004 *** £14.99

EVEN a work so Italian as *Cavalleria* is not going to deflect the Peter Moores Foundation from its mission of opera in English. At the start this recording sounds too sanitised and un-Mediterranean. David Parry adopts slow and lyrical tempos, more Shropshire than Sicily, more he holds back his hand deliberately so that the emotions can flood out when the Turiddu (Dennis O'Neill) comes on stage rather than serenading off it. O'Neill is very much the linchpin of the set. He is in his best and most forthright voice, but goes easy on the sobs. The farewell to Mamma Lucia (Elizabeth

Bainbridge, drawn out of retirement and turning in a very sturdy performance) is a model of barely suppressed emotion. Nelly Miricioiu as Santuzza is more questionable casting: her soprano has some threadbare patches. Diction too is a problem. Turiddu's propensity to play away is made all too credible by Diana Montague's creamy Lola. Phillip Joil is a properly philosophic Alfio, but the Geoffrey Mitchell Choir sounds too English. A useful introduction to Mascagni, but those wanting more fire should turn back to Karajan on DG.

ORCHESTRAL Barry Millington

MAHLER *Symphony No 4* Rocofof/CBSO/Rattle EMI CDC 5 56563 2 *** £15.99 THE greatest surprise in this new recording is the opening

four bars. Where the jingling sleigh bells conventionally slow down for the main theme on violins, Rattle adopts a very deliberate pace for the sleigh ride. The brakes are unequally applied, leaving the flutes and clarinets adrift from the violins, and then the main theme picks up at a faster speed. The effect is bizarre, but Rattle knows what he is doing. The reversed tempos correspond to the memory of the Mahler tradition in the 1920s, while the "planned rhythmic disarray" is authentic according to the Mahler scholar Donald Mitchell.

The raised bells of the CBSO woodwind have a keener edge than those of Maazel's Vienna Philharmonic, although the latter's strings have a sumptuous

sheen that the British orchestra can never quite match. Something of that rawness is carried over into the rustic fiddling of the Scherzo, but the serenity of the slow movement is wonderfully sustained. Amanda Rocofof is an endearing angelic presence in the finale.

CHAMBER Hilary Finch

MENDELSSOHN *The Piano Trios* Vienna Piano Trio Nimbus NI 5553 *** £13.49 THIS disc has been impatiently awaited after the Vienna Piano Trio's releases of the Dvořák, Beethoven and, most recently, Haydn trios. And, with the ensemble's skill at drawing the listener in to eavesdrop on a high-powered conversation among friends as impressive as ever, it is no disappointment. Energy bubbles from the outer movements of the first

of Mendelssohn's two trios: it is amassed gradually and cumulatively through biting articulation, springing piano playing and a meticulous balance of voices. Stefan Mendl brings clarity and ever-changing light to the long central song without words, and Wolfgang Redik's violin makes this a midsummer night's dream of a Scherzo.

For the C minor Op 66 trio, a similarly lively equilibrium between all three instruments makes for a long, exciting crescendo of an opening, and creates a rare tension and strength in the uncoiling and developing of its energies. Pace and tone of voice are perfectly judged in the *Andante espressivo*; then the airborne Scherzo vanishes in the brush of a bow before the great chorale glows out of a finale as high-spirited as it is impassioned.

Worth hearing **Worth considering** **Worth buying**

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

Is nuking more natural than negotiation? Felipe Fernández-Armesto braves an historical minefield

Fallout in latest war of the words

Jeremy Black has an answer to every question and the answer is always the same. Ask him what happened in history, or how, or why and he will tell you it was a mixture of culture, cook-up and chaos. He is right, but the effect becomes familiar and we all know what that breeds. To appreciate his work, you have to

sume that wars start with human motives, not vast determinants such as economics, evolution or class struggle. Some thinkers claim that war is normal or "natural", whereas peace has to be explained. Field Marshal Montgomery used to refer inquirers to Maerlinck's *The Life of the Art*.

Historians often see conflict as part of the chaos left over after creation: it happens at random or is caused — if at all — by equivalents of the flicker of a butterfly's wings. A. J. P. Taylor reduced the causes of the Great War to intractable railway timetables and the holiday habits of the European elite. The search for the key to all wars is doomed to lose its way in peculiarities.

Black, who is dismissive of systems and suspicious of generalisations, would like to explain every war separately but has time only for perfunctory mentions of most of them. He therefore tries to combine a chronological division into three long periods with a value-free categorisation into "wars be-



"What they fought each other for I could not well make out": war-gamers at play

between cultures", "wars within cultures" and "civil wars". These categories do not work and he does not stick to them consistently. In the end, like Old Kaspar, he thoughtfully rolls the bones extracted from the battlefield and exclaims in effect: "What they fought each other for I could not well make out." This is honest and the emphasis on the patternlessness of large-scale conflicts is salutary and true; but the reader is left with a feeling of sagging morale.

It also shows how briefly this superiority lasted. Technology is easily appropriated and has never displaced such traditional battle-winners as leadership, morale and terrain, or the warlike culture of bushido, say, or jihad. Nor, if Black is right, is God always on the side of the big battalions.

Black has an engaging, boyish enthusiasm for battles, a teacher's gift of clarity and a valiant hatred of jargon. But he never gives us the "rattling good" experience delivered by modern masters of military history like John Keegan and Michael Howard. Partly this is a matter of style: unrelenting sentences and drum-beaten dates (I counted 48 on a single page) create the rhythm of a route-march.

Though Black ranges the world, his concept of war is narrow. We never hear what soldiering was like or what happened to services between the wars. For Black, war is the continuation of politics by slightly different means. Though there is a chapter on "War and the State" there is little about psychol-

gy, sensibilities, art, literature or science — apart from technology. Future campaigns will be fought against terrorist hackers in vulnerable cyberspace, yet terrorism is compressed into two lines and espionage ignored. Black neglects the winds and currents which have determined naval outcomes for most of history; the historiography of this subject is cursed by too much hot air and not enough wind.

Yet the book has great qualities. On the rare occasions when Black varies the pace, you can appreciate a lively mind at work — when he compares the American and Jacobite rebellions, for instance, or makes out a cogent case for war-gamers. His erudition is genuine. He offers delightfully risky judgments: the British Empire was the result of equilibrium on the Continent; television has made war a "spectator sport"; no barriers will stop the next "barbarian" invasions of "civilisation". He is the only historian of war to give Native Americans, Uzbeks and Dzungarians their due. On the 18th century, his is the best account there is. I approve of his fondness for the one superpower the stars have left us with. When you think of the states that have contended for that status in recent times, you thank God for the United States — the worst superpower we could have, except for all the others.

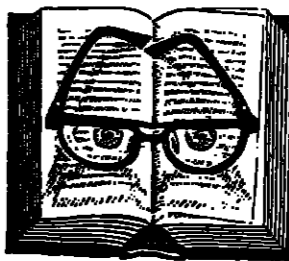
From Adler to Zola

AS Tom Stoppard shows in *The Invention of Love* (now coming to the end of its run at the National Theatre), A. E. Housman was not only a poet but a passionate and formidable textual scholar. He once remarked in a letter that he had "chosen a dry subject" for a talk because he felt Oxford scholarship was "taking on an excessively literary tinge". He lectured on "Greek Nouns in Latin Poetry".

His letters (expertly edited by Henry Maas in 1971) are full of such parched observations: "The use and abuse of the ball-moulding in the Decorated period in the district between Gloucester and Hereford is remarkable", or, of his chameleon, "You will be amused to hear that the careful Louis knocked down a small girl".

But the letters are also full of complaints to his publisher about errors in successive printings of his poems, and in his classical papers he condemned incompetent editors with all the mocking gusto of the cruelest of hanging judges. Which is why editing Housman's poetry is one of the toughest challenges in English literary scholarship. In his new Oxford edition of *The Poems of A. E. Housman* (80), Archie Burnett looks to have triumphed. Here are 600 pages of minutely detailed scholarship, with the editor even inventing new symbols to explain more exactly the state of the manuscripts.

As Stoppard has Housman say, "A scholar's business is to add to what is known. That is all. But it is capable of giving



BIBLIOMANE

the very greatest satisfaction, because knowledge is good... You can't have too much of it and there is no little too little to be worth having. There is truth and falsehood in a comma.

As well as the major poetry, Burnett gives us 15 pages of poetic fragments and nearly 100 pages of Housman's precocious juvenile poetry and light verse (much of it newly unearthed). Then come 250 pages of commentary, elucidating precisely what Housman probably had in mind when writing his unsimple laments. In particular Burnett shows that he had in his famous memory a mass of phrases and cadences from the Bible and from other poets. True evaluation of this edition will take as many years as its compilation, but I believe even Housman would have saluted its erudition.

HARROGATE has a literate new bookshop: Richard Axe's at 12 Cheltenham Crescent. Customers were jostling to pay after the opening on Saturday, and the initial stock had interesting items from the libraries of the detective writer J. I. M. Stewart (Michael Innes) and the eicher Robin Tanner.

FEW collections can be as pointless as that of George Cosmatos, being auctioned at Sotheby's on March 31. Everyone from Adler to Zola is here, represented by a letter, a card or a signed photograph. One inscribed print from Buzz Aldrin of the *Apollo 11* landing, one letter from Sir Joseph Banks, one letter each from Georges II and III. This is celebrity-hunting at its lowest. At worst, splitting up archives and separating documents from any context deprives historians of evidence. The sale, at least, offers a chance that these items will go to places where they will be more than tokens.

JIM MCCUE

WHY WARS HAPPEN

By Jeremy Black
Reaktion Books, £19.95
ISBN 1 86189 017 6

WAR AND THE WORLD

Military Power and the Fate of Continents, 1450-2000
By Jeremy Black
Yale University, £25
ISBN 0 300 07203 3

relish the virtues of a great campaigner, not the cavalry commander's élan, nor the "strategy of the indirect approach" but the footslogging tenacity and a commitment to attrition by bombarding the reader with facts and dates.

In complementary books he applies the formula to warfare in the past 500 years. It works particularly well in his volume on the outcomes of wars, less so in the one about their causes. In Southey's poem, Old Kaspar's grandchildren as-

A cut above the rest

Hardy Amies finds a life of Dior that just suits him

CHRISTIAN DIOR
By Marie-France Pochma
Aurum Press, £18.95
ISBN 1 85410 547 7

world of Chanel, Schiaparelli and Molyneux.

I find the descriptions of the team Dior gathered around him particularly admirable. He met them during his time at Lelong and Piguet. They saw at once how talented he was and rushed to join him. Dior was very kind to me and took me round his couture house: he introduced me to



Sketch for "Miss Dior" perfume by René Gruau in 1949

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Suzanne Luling and the very chic Mme Brizard. The latter dealt with hats: Luling was a very elegant *directrice* who circulated comfortably within the rich and cultivated circles. All French couture houses know the rules laid down by the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture*. The use of the description "couture" is very jealously guarded. This should be noted by the manufacturers and "off-the-peg" shops who use the word to mean "expensive".

The complete picture of the structure of a couture house is admirably presented. As my house is the only true couture house left in London, it is pleasant to see a true couturier described. The average fashion editors of today only think of a "designer": a student from the art college with no experience of waiting on customers.

In the days when debutantes "came out" at the Queen Charlotte's Ball, mothers brought their daughters to a couture dress show and explained the role of the *vendeuse* and her relationship to dressmakers and tailors. The *vendeuse* would make suggestions to the customer and then politely pass on instructions to the dressmaker and tailor.

Chapter 10 - "The American Love Affair" - vividly describes Dior's first visit to the United States and his working there. The postwar months for his and my openings show the start of the importance of dress shows. Before the war dress shows were very private affairs, for the customers only - not even the press. But stores overseas were, in the postwar years, hungry for the new design ideas then appearing. The clever French knew how to extract the prices of dresses before entry to the collection was allowed. A dress was not supplied but a *toile*, "a pattern cut in canvas", was revealed.

This was the time when dates of the opening of the season were fixed: January gave the representatives of the overseas stores time to get the dresses copied for their own shops. The date suited ladies of quality to make their purchases for the forthcoming season. July became the date for the opening of the Autumn/Winter season.

The author is boldly honest in dating her work 1994 - so we get the mention of the beginning of Yves Saint Laurent but silence regarding the arrival of the new "designers". The book should be read carefully by every fashion editor of today and by every dress shopkeeper. It should be made available to every design student. The description of Dior's funeral will turn the heart of the general reader.

IF CHRISTINA ROSSETTI is to be believed, there is no friend like a sister. This is probably because a sibling can often seem less like a friend than an enemy. Sisterhood can be as discordant as it is harmonious, as venacious as it is consoling. But it is in this bitersweet blending that the fascination lies.

Carol Birch clearly understands the complexities, but they do not trip her up; there is a daring simplicity to her tale. Cathy, aged 37, is nursing thoughts of suicide. Not because she is particularly unhappy, but because she thinks that there's something on the other side better than what she has now. She lives alone in a small northern town, surviving on desultory

Riches to kiln for

Gold has gripped mankind for millennia and the arcanum - the secret of turning base metal into gold - has been a long-term dream. The key was the philosophers' stone, which would not only effect the transmutation but also confer everlasting life. On the whole, the former was more desirable than the latter: a short life, but a wealthy one. The alchemists failed, but in about the 7th century AD in China an apparently-not-very-exciting version of philosophers' stone was discovered - Al₂O₃·2SiO₂·2H₂O - which could transform clay into money. The clay, kaolin, mixed with china rock, petunse, after firing was converted into a new material: porcelain. In Europe, a thousand years later, with the hunt still on for the arcanum for gold, there was - with the growth of China-mania - added another, that for porcelain. Augustus the Strong, Elec-

David Battie

THE ARCANUM
The Extraordinary True Story of the Invention of European Porcelain
By Janet Gleeson
Bantam, £12.99
ISBN 0 593 04348 0

tor of Saxony and King of Poland, needed gold. He needed the gold for his army, to support a lifestyle that even Louis XV envied, for his innumerable mistresses and for his fanatical obsession with porcelain. Enter our hero: Johann Friedrich Böttger. Böttger had been trying to turn base metal into gold (failed), but his reputation was such that Augustus banged him up in the Albrechtsburg castle and told him to stay there until he did. Böttger escaped, was recaptured and was lucky to escape death. By sleight of hand he managed to convince the King that he could, indeed, effect the transmutation. Inevitably, he was unsuccessful and in common with those who failed to deliver at the time, again faced death. Augustus relented and set him another task: find the secret of porcelain.

The Arcanum is the story of that search. Curiously, there is hardly a character in this book with any redeeming features whatsoever. They are money-grabbing, boastful, cheating, lying, tight in both senses, obsessed, debauched and disreputable. Yet out of all this corruption comes some of the most beguiling porcelain of the 18th century. And so, too, comes a wonderful and gripping story. It bears comparison to Dava Sobel's *Longitude*, not only in the physical appearance of the book and its length; in both, the most of the action is set in the first half of the 18th century, the protagonists in each fight for money and recognition and die embittered.

The Arcanum will entertain and fill in gaps for those of a ceramic bent but is wide and entertaining enough in its scope for the general reader. The research is thorough and accurate and has been blended into the story so that it in no way intrudes. It has a list of sources and a good index. If it lacks anything, it is just one Böttger's work.

Böttger's meticulous research was not only into the right mix of ingredients for the "body" of his porcelain but, equally importantly, into the kiln control and temperature. This had to be 1,450C - far higher than any European ceramics had required before.



The Space Shuttle's base is protected from the heat of re-entry with ceramic tiles

Today's astronauts, as they leave their ship for a space walk, can see the Shuttle encased in the distant descendants of Böttger's experiments into high temperature materials: the outside is ceramic-tiled to withstand the heat of re-entry. And the view through their visors is screened by a film of gold. Böttger would have approved.

David Battie is a Director of Sotheby's and founder contributor to the Antiques Roadshow.

all fairly typical really. And now she's pulled the biggest stunt of all, she's actually going to die."

Wry exasperation is what first sets the tone of the novel, but what the story unveils are the fragile feelings of envy and abandonment, anguish and concern which it cleaves. Cathy sets off in a clapped-out car to search for her sister, she finds that she has embarked on a journey which will draw her into her past, through a world of lost acquaintances, and towards her childhood home. Renewed feeling and understanding lie at the end. For the reader it is an

effortless journey. Carol Birch unfolds her tale in confident, limpid prose. Her candid northern voice cuts sadness free of sentimentality and finds intensity in the inconsequential and drama in the everyday. She has a fine ear for conversation. This is a beautiful, restrained book, a study of sisterhood of a quiet intensity which picks up reflections from Forster's *Howards End*.

Z - A Love Story, cuts a contrast, although the outlines of its plot are broadly the same. The Icelandic writer, Vigdís Grímsdóttir, also explores the relationship be-

tween two sisters as it unfolds itself at the point when one of them is suffering a terminal disease. But the prose is as fuggy as a Reykjavik flat. As storyline rambles through a mist of maudlin memories, repetitive letters and sloppily come to an understanding of each other.

Apparently it was a bestseller in Iceland two years ago. "Told in different voices," a reviewer writes, "its real genius lies in being able to differentiate characters through stylistic devices." This distinction appears to have vanished in Anne Jeeves's translation. At a time when the novel of snow and ice is in literary fashion, it seems a sad waste.

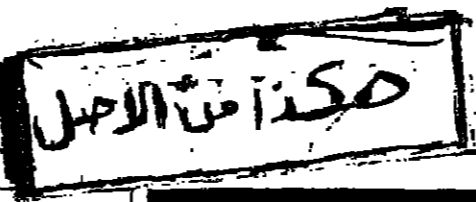
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سنة ١٤١٩

From Adler to Zola

Tom Stoppard... National Theatre... a passionate and... textual scholar...



A writer cast away from his better self

Peter Ackroyd wonders whether Lawrence Durrell's lifelong restlessness betrayed an uncertainty of his talent

He was never sure that he succeeded, either in art or in life. That insecurity began at the earliest possible opportunity...

LAWRENCE DURRELL A Biography By Ian S. MacNiven Faber, £25 ISBN 0 571 72402 2



To shake or not to shake? Martini-sink James Bond, played by Sean Connery in Never Say Never Again (1983), models his favourite beverage

Meeting you with a view to a chill

AS THE head mixologist at London's Met Bar, I eagerly await the release of any new cocktail or drinks book. With books on wine and food swarming the market, serious attempts at an informative drinks manual and not just a coffee table adornment have been few and far between.

Ben Reed THE MARTINI COMPANION By Gary Regan and Mardee Haider Regan The Running Press, £17.99 ISBN 0 7624 0061 7

Andrew Motion sifts through the mailbox of a great American poet

Mouse with sharp teeth

Think of the big, jampacked Technicolor magic bus of American poetry. From this country, it looked in the 1960s as though Robert Lowell was driving. Allen Ginsberg and various friends were running up and down the aisle. Somewhere near the middle, in her broad-brimmed black hat, surrounded by a respectful hush, sat Marianne Moore. Near the back, overlooked but watchful, was Elizabeth Bishop.

THE SELECTED LETTERS OF MARIANNE MOORE Edited by Bonnie Costello, Celeste Goodridge and Cristanne Miller Faber, £30 ISBN 0 571 19354 4

brother into her mind's eye. These two were audience-confidantes with whom she felt open but still not inclined to discuss her private-and-personal life.



Moore fashioned poems slowly, wrote letters fast and prolifically

riotous travel-life, or any other way of spending time that is not self-effacing and inward-contemplative, would be a betrayal. In other words, Moore did have a private existence—a very rich and developed one, which is constantly on show here.

Inevitably, this means some of her best letters engage with other writers—in quick judgments (Ulysses has not held my interest long enough to enable me to read a single section of it to the end), and in more extended portraits such as her brilliant description of Yeats in 1932: "He is heavy, smiling, benevolent and elegant with a springiness and vigor that no invalid could very well counterfeit."



Floating: Lawrence Durrell by the Channel as a boy

of history as a permanent presence in the daily world and in particular he was introduced to Jacobean and Elizabethan literature. This anguished and vulnerable schoolboy also learnt to dissipulate his feelings with bravura and pugnacity, as well as "pretence, silence, lies."

Now it turns out that Bishop was driving the bus, and that throughout her journey Moore had been helping her to read the map. Although Moore was 24 years older than Bishop, and although they did not spend long periods of time together, they relied heavily on each other's sympathy and example. The intimacy which charged their connection depended crucially on their poems. But what came in the post was indispensable as well.



BIBLIOMANE... he very... because... you can't... and there... to be worth... truth and... drama... As well... Burner... exotic... (K) page... means... light... intricate... dates... being... man... when... show... James... phrases... the Black... True... will... complete... How... is...

Fear and loathing in old Blighty

Tobias Hill THE OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH SHORT STORIES Edited by A. S. Byatt OUP, £19.99 ISBN 0 19 214238 0

English short story was created for the mass-market magazines of the 19th and 20th centuries—a market now dying away. Pity the poor English short story! Old at 200, knee high to a comma beside drama and poetry, and corralled here in splendid isolation.

The temptation with a collection like this is to look for who has been left out as much as who has been kept in. If Saki (who was born in Burma) is included, why not Wilde? If Kipling (who was born and partially raised in India) is in,

why not Ishiguro or Rushdie? Isn't Roald Dahl the natural successor to Saki's twisted tales? Where is E. M. Forster, and is Somerset Maugham really (as Byatt says) "a little too mechanical"?

Still, this is to look at the glass as half-empty, and to ignore the brilliance of the works Byatt has brought together. There are the comic English stories of Aldous Huxley, Saki and P. G. Wodehouse, whose The Reverent Wooing of Archibald shows the Performing Flea at his best

Archibald that, had his brain been constructed of silk, he would have been hard put to it to find sufficient material to make a canary a pair of carmin-knickers. There are the fantasies ("A surprisingly strong line", Byatt notes) of M. R. James's ghosts, T. H. White's trolls, Ian McEwan's Solid Geometry and Angela Carter's Samarkand, "where wild tulips have put out flowers like blown bubbles of blood".

There is the social realism of Hardy, Arthur Morrison and Mary Mann's shocking and beautifully written, Little Brother. And even in a collection like this, some stories stand out. V. S. Pritchett's late work On the Edge of a Cliff. H. E. Bates's study of suppressed emotion in The Waterfall, and the sour, musty genius of Graham Greene in The Destroyers are all great.

IN METRO Erica Wagner meets Charles Frazier, plus Nick Hornby NEW AUTHORS PUBLISH YOUR OWN WORK ALL SUBJECTS CONSIDERED... MINERVA PRESS

THIS IS a book of multiple masterpieces: to a certain degree, it also shows how emasculated English literature becomes once you carve away the muscle and meat of Scotland, Wales and Ireland. A British anthology of short stories could have included Joyce and Beckett, Muriel Spark and Bernard MacLaverty; many English anthologies include some of these authors anyway, assigning them a kind of honorary Englishness.

Bargains of the week: British castles for special breaks, Ireland at Easter, super deal on Kenya



A selection of last-minute holiday and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and further afield, many at bargain prices.

BRITAIN

BRIDESHEAD can be revisited as part of a midweek package that includes tickets to the magnificent Castle Howard and two nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Green Man in Malton, North Yorkshire. The deal is available this month and next for £91 from English Rose Hotels. Details: 01723 374374.

CHELSEA Flower Show tickets and B&B at a Heathrow hotel on May 20 are included in a £115 package available from Goldenrail. Details: 01904 638973.

ROOMS full of swords, pistols and cannon are among the attractions at the

Royal Armouries in Leeds, featured in an Easter family outing with Superbreak. A day at the museum and a night's B&B at a four-star hotel costs £70 for a family of four over the holiday weekend. Details: 0161-238 5257.

A **CASTLE** hotel in North Wales, a Cheshire hall with golf course and a hotel with indoor bowls on the Isle of Wight are available for Easter breaks from Warner Holidays. Prices start from £152 for three nights' half-board. Details: 0870 6016012.

A **NIGHT** of luxury in one of the country's most famous hotels will be available for ten days from next Thursday for £100 as Claridge's in London's West End continues its centenary celebrations. The special rate includes service and applies to both single and double rooms. Details: 0171-629 8860.

ST GEORGE'S DAY is being marked in Cheltenham with coach tours of the town and surrounding Cotswolds and walking tours. Hotel accommodation starts from £35 for a double room. Details from the tourist information centre: 01242 522878.

EUROPE

TURKEY is an ideal place to find bargains at this time of year with pleasant temperatures and the hotels and apartments reopening and gearing up for the summer. Tony Dawe writes.

Crusader Travel is offering a fortnight at Marmaris from Good Friday for £199. Hotels are allocated on arrival but you can choose your accommodation in advance for an extra £30. The same fortnight in Olu Deniz costs from £249.

Treasures has sold out at Easter but it has weekend breaks in Istanbul over both the early and late May Bank Holidays. Flights leave from Gatwick on the Friday and four nights' B&B costs from £219. The price is £20 lower on quieter weekends.

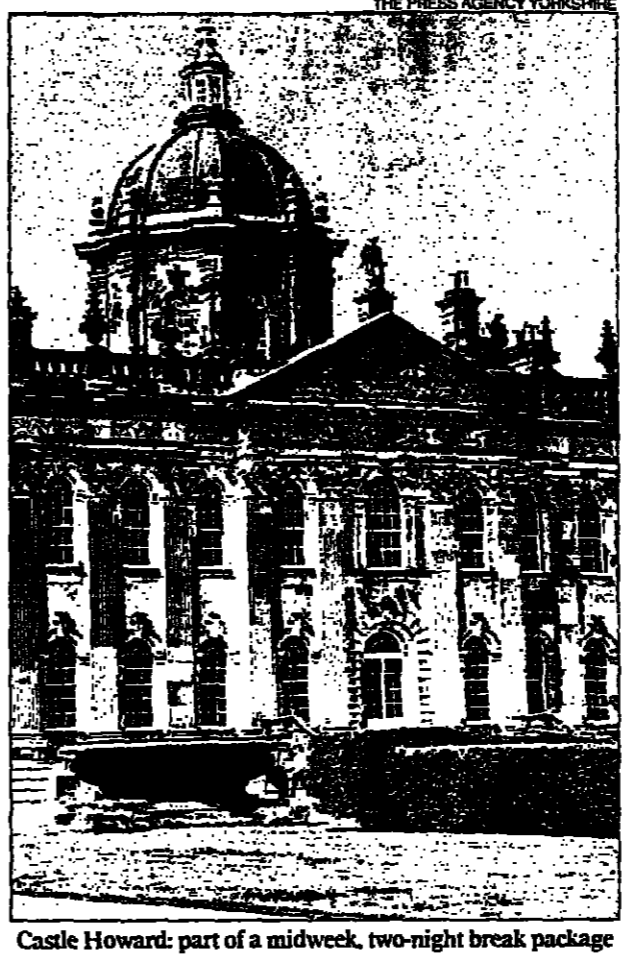
For those seeking more adventure, Accommodation Overseas is offering a Jeep safari in Turkey for a week from May 26 for £479, including full board with some nights in a tent and flights from Gatwick and Manchester. Details: Crusader, 0181-744 0474; Treasures, 0171-494 2292; Accommodation Overseas, 0181-977 2984.

EASTER in the Canaries at a saving of £131 is on offer from Sunset Holidays. Fly from Glasgow on Saturday April 11 and stay in self-catering apartments in Puerto Rico on Gran Canaria for a fortnight and the price will be £249. Details: 01204 434411.

IRELAND for Easter week is available with Irish Ferries Holidays, which offers self-catering in Ballybunion holiday village in Co Kerry for £132, including ferry crossing, based on four adults travelling. The village is close to beaches and a golf course. Details: 0990 170000.

SMALL Majorcan hotels close to the sea but away from the bustle are available for the Whitsun Bank Holiday week from Castaways. Prices start from £424 for a week with flights from Gatwick or East Midlands on May 23 and 24. Details: 01737 812255.

THE QE2 is an unlikely entrant in this column but eight nights aboard the liner for £697 must be a bargain. However, you must book now but wait until late November to take the Canaries Retreat cruise with Page & Moy. Details: 0116-250 7722.



Castle Howard: part of a midweek, two-night break package

LONG-HAUL

KENYA for three weeks for £509 with half-board is a great bargain, and at that price you can afford the extra to explore the country. Lunn Poly is offering the Thomson holiday, which starts from Gatwick on Easter Sunday. Details available from Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.

GREEN fees, water sports and an Indian Ocean setting all included, plus the chance to watch the Johnnie Walker Golf Classic: what more could a golf nut want? Elite Vacations is offering the package to Mauritius at the end of this month for £1,165 including a week's half-board and return flights. Details: 0181-864 4431.

ALL-INCLUSIVE resorts between two seas and near a golf course must be hard to find but one exists on the Caribbean island of St Kitts and is available for £999, a £210 saving, for a fortnight in May and June with Tropical Places. Fly from Gatwick. Details: 01342 825123.

ASEAN EXPLORER has dropped regional flight supplements to Thailand and cut up

to £50 from spring and early summer holidays to mark the launch of its latest brochure. Prices now start at £562 for fortnight in Pattaya. Seven two-centre holidays also available. Details: 01481 823417.

CUBA for a fortnight for £579 at an all-inclusive island resort is on offer from May 1 to June 19 from Hayes & Jarvis. Details: 0181-222 7833.

RUGBY FANS can take England's international against the Springboks Cape Town on July 4 and enjoy a week's holiday from £3 with Cape Sports & Leisure. Flights are extra but can be arranged at a discount. Details: 01296 689015.

All prices are per person and based on two sharing room, unless otherwise stated.

WEEKEND TRAVEL

See The Times on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays

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CRICKET

Umpires of future to face stringent test of their knowledge

BRITISH umpires — like their counterparts in other high-profile sports these days — are finding it difficult to get their authority increasing...

BY SIMON WILDE

class level: Nigel Plews, a former policeman. Four began standing in matches within eight months of retiring as players...

seasons, keep match diaries and identify two people who can vouch for their competence...

Tendulkar turns tide to thwart Australia

CHIN TENDULKAR revived his unusual role as a match-winning bowler as he beat Australia by 41 runs in the opening game of a 196-angular one-day tournament in Cochin yesterday...

Australia batsman to make an impact, scoring 65 before becoming Tendulkar's third victim, stumped by Mongia as he missed a drive...

Scoreboard, page 49

Canadians seek a silver lining

FROM ANGELA COURT IN MINNEAPOLIS

OF THE four disciplines comprising the 1998 world figure skating championships here, the ice dance is likely to be at the centre of attention...

After the dance event at the Olympic Games in Nagano, where Jean Senft, the Canadian judge, criticised openly the marking and Sha-Lynn Bourne and Victor Kraatz of Canada, went on record to say that the result was a fix...

One of the biggest criticisms is the lack of movement throughout the whole competition, with couples rarely changing places after the compulsory dances...

With Pasha Grishuk and Evgeny Platov, twice the Olympic champions, having retired from eligible competition, the way is clear for Anjelika Krylova and Oleg Ovsiyannikov...

The focus of attention is likely to be on the battle for the minor medals. Marina Anissina and Gwendal Peizerat of France, the bronze medal-winners at the Olympics...



Elena Berezhnaya and Anton Sikharulidze, of Russia, perform during the short programme of the pairs competition, in which they are lying in second place

were fourth and they are convinced that there was a judging conspiracy, whereby their fifth place in the first compulsory dance ended their chances of a medal...

al support. All week, Bourne and Kraatz's practice sessions have been packed with fans cheering their every move, while their compulsory dances received the sort of reception normally reserved for free dance.

are here to gain experience. Lying 24th of the 30 couples competing, they need to at least hold this position to qualify to skate their free programme tomorrow...

SWIMMING Australian is shown leniency for doping

BY JOHN GOODBODY

RICHARD UPTON, the Australia swimmer, was yesterday given only an £830 fine and a reprimand for a positive drugs test in a controversy that has divided the sport...

Upton, a relay silver medal-winner in the world championships in January, was found to have taken probenecid, a banned substance...

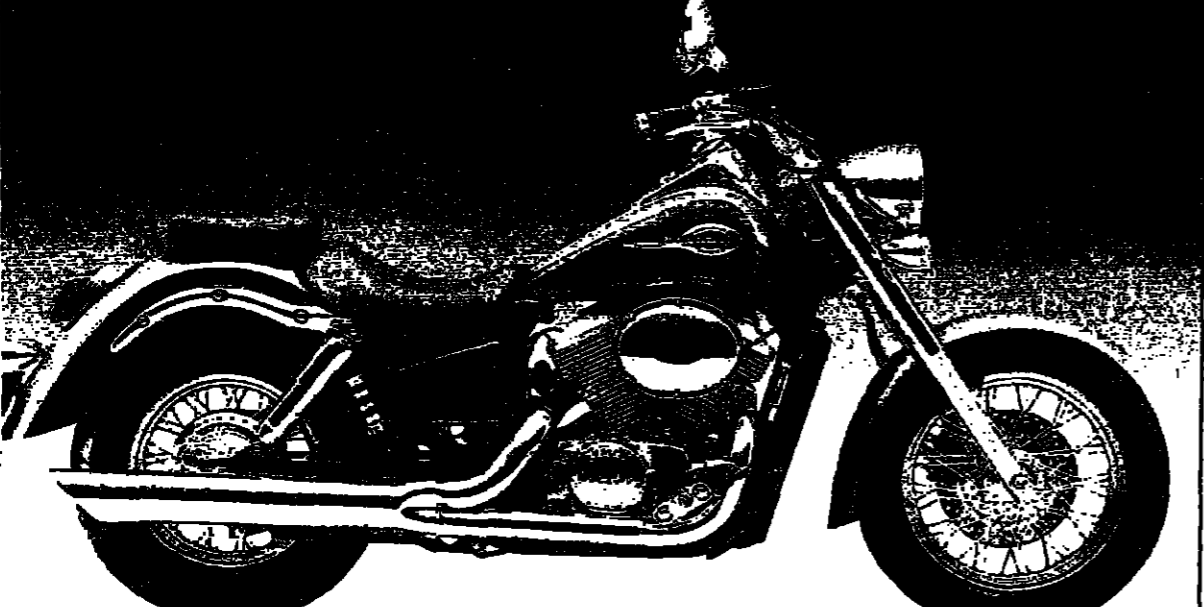
The case has aroused interest because Australian Swimming Incorporated (ASI) was among those governing bodies that were particularly critical of China at the world championships in Perth in January...

Upton, who will now be able to take part in Australia's trials for the Commonwealth Games, said: "I am extremely relieved. The last four weeks have been hell for me..."

The disciplinary committee of ASI found Upton took the drug inadvertently and for therapeutic purposes. However, a spokesman said: "Under ASI's strict liability policy, which leaves the responsibility for any substance taken inadvertently on the athlete..."

AN EXCLUSIVE PRIZE DRAW THE TIMES

FOUR HONDAS TO BE WON



To celebrate Honda's 50th anniversary, The Times offers readers the chance to win one of four sensational bikes. THE PRIZES ARE: ONE OF TWO HONDA HORNETS, A HONDA VTR 1000 FIRESTORM AND A HONDA VT750C SHADOW...

THERE IS STILL A CHANCE TO WIN A TOYOTA — SEE PAGE 49

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Although the two declarers who reached Four Spades on this deal from the 1997 Gold Cup semi-finals both made their contract, there was some interesting misdirection and misplay.

Bridge hand diagram showing Dealer North, Love all, IMPs, and card layouts for both sides.

At both tables South opened One Spade in third seat and North responded Three Clubs showing a maximum pass with good club values and four-card spade support...

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard. RECIBIENDO: a. An official reception, b. Killing a bull, c. A corridor. OBIE: a. An Ashanti king, b. A Bradford former pupil, c. A theatrical award.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Monaco chess. In the Monaco competition, Anatoly Karpov, the Fide champion, was anxious to restore his reputation after his modest showing in Wijk aan Zee...

Chess board diagram showing the position after White's 27th move. Includes a list of moves and piece positions.

White: Anatoly Karpov Black: Vladimir Kramnik Monte Carlo rapidplay March 1998. Semi-Slav Defence. 1 d4 Nf6, 2 c4 e6, 3 Nf3 d5, 4 Nc3 c5, 5 e3 Nbd7, 6 Qc2 Bb6, 7 Bc3 0-0, 8 0-0 dxc4, 9 Bxc4 a6, 10 Rd1 b5, 11 Be2 Qc7, 12 e4 a5, 13 g3 a4, 14 e3 Bb7, 15 dxe5 Nxe5, 16 Bg5 Nd3+, 17 Bx3 Bc5, 18 Bxf6 gxf6, 19 Bg4 Ra6, 20 Bf5 Bc8, 21 Bxc8 Qxc8, 22 Bc1 Qe5, 23 Rcd8 Rcd8, 24 Nd1 c5, 25 Qc5 Qc3, 26 Ne3 Qxb2, 27 Qc2.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene. White to play. This position is from the game Bauer — Kinsman, France, 1998. In this position, White is using his solid centre as the basis for a kingside attack. Black is trying to chase away the white knight. Can White do better than retreating? Solution on page 50.

Handwritten text in Arabic script: كذا هو الاسم

THE GREY MONK TO reward followers on Aintree mission

By RICHARD EVANS RACING CORRESPONDENT AFTER a brief flirtation with the flat, jump returns to centre stage today as the three-day Martell Grand National meeting gets underway at Aintree, offering hope of compensation to those who missed out at the Cheltenham Festival.



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

The Grey Monk was the subject of a substantial antipathy plunge for the Cheltenham Gold Cup, but backers burnt their fingers when the Gordon Richards-trained chaser suffered an interrupted preparation and failed to make the line-up. As a result, he appears in the featured Martell Cup Chase, the first of four races televised by BBC.

But for a mistake three fences from home, he might well have justified favouritism at Cheltenham. Escartefigue, second to Florida Pearl in the Royal & Sun Alliance Chase, represents the younger generation and the easier ground will also suit him. However, with David Nicholson having gone 26 days and 51 runners without a winner, he is best watched.

The ten-year-old, winner of 12 of his 20 starts, has raced only once this year when, significantly, he gave 4lb and a six-length beating to Rough Quest, favourite for the big race on Saturday. That Haydock success, achieved in a fast time, came 110 days ago but the long absence should not alarm his supporters.

Buddy Marvel is the form choice in the opening Seagram Top Novices Hurdle, judged on his fine victory in the Dovecot Hurdle at Kempton, but he disappointed at Cheltenham. Martin Pipe runs two progressive four-year-olds in Fatalist and Pele Risk, but is again particularly keen on Dawn Leader.

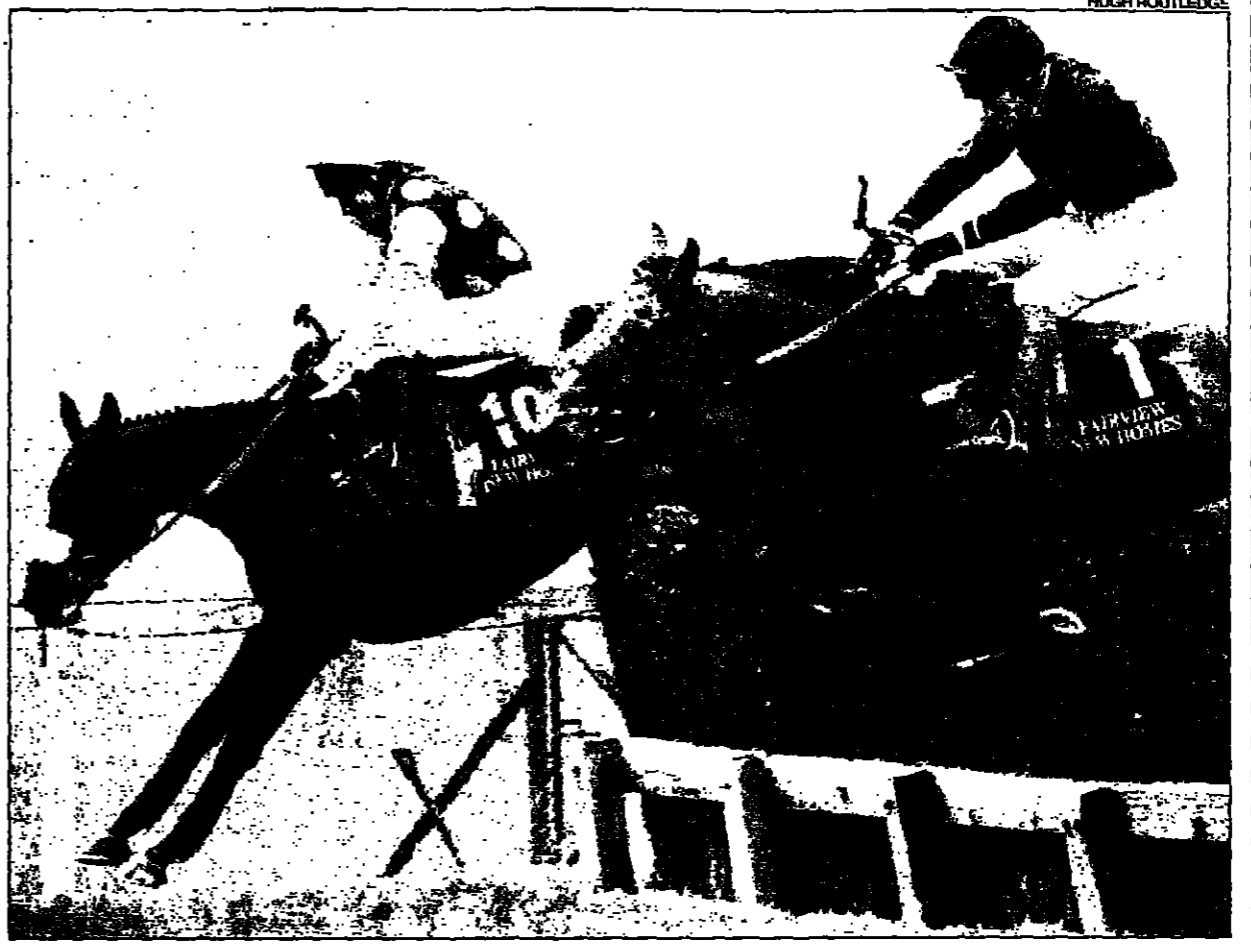
This grade two race often goes to a horse beaten in the Gold Cup and Dorans Pride is the obvious candidate after finishing third to Cool Dawn.

Jim Old was forced to Nap: DAWN LEADER (2.00 Aintree) Next best: The Grey Monk (2.35 Aintree)

Bradley and Powell stand test of time

By CHRIS McGRATH

LESSER men would turn grey at the mere thought of riding in the Martell Grand National. In the case of Graham Bradley and Brendan Powell, however, that prospect is helping to ensure that the colour of their hair represents the emptiest of concessions to the passage of time.



Perryman, noseband, gets the better of Bank Avenue in the Fairview New Homes Novices' Chase at Ascot yesterday

Both demonstrated as much with dashing rides from the front at Ascot yesterday, Bradley winning the Daily Telegraph Novices' Chase on Hoh Warrior and Powell landing a gamble on Monnaie Forte in the Trilium Handicap Hurdle.

It must be hoped that Saturday's perils were not outlined too vividly by a fatal fall for the favourite, Ask The Butler. Mr Strong Gale also took a heavy fall, from which Timothy Murphy hobbled away with a sore ankle, though declaring himself ready to partner Court Melody on Saturday. One of the definitive moments of Powell's career came in the 1988 National, when he picked Rhyme 'N' Reason off the floor at Becher's first time.

He has dictated a number of races from the front this season, and it was thrilling to see him turn the screw on Monnaie Forte's rivals. Admittedly, the horse returned to hurdles off a much lower mark than the one he has earned over fences this season. But, after a grueling

race at Cheltenham, he arrived from the Borders in a lather of sweat and another jockey might easily have misjudged the freedom his mount could sustain.

As it was, Powell had conserved enough to hold off Tibetan by a length - much to the disgust, one suspects, of the bookmakers rash enough to do business with James Adam, the permit holder whose robust approach to life mirrors that of his horse.

AINTREE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 2.00 Fataliste, 2.35 Dorans Pride, 3.10 Edelweis Du Moulin.

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

100 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (F.F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. B West (7) 88. 100 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (F.F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. B West (7) 88.

2.00 SEAGRAM TOP NOVICES HURDLE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 101 212104 CALLEER 16 (D.S.) (F) 2-10-97. S Taylor 126.

2.35 MARELL CUP CHASE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 102 212112 ESCARTIFIQUE 13 (D.F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. R Dawson 148.

3.10 SANDHAM MAGHULL NOVICES CHASE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 103 212120 ADRIAN BOY 12 (D.F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. R Dawson 148.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table with 4 columns: Trainers, Wins, Races, Jockeys, Wins, Races, %.

RACELINE

Raceline advertisement with phone number 0930 1684 and various race results.

3.45 JOHN HUGHES TROPHY HANDICAP CHASE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 104 212101 CHERRYBUTT 21 (F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. M J Tizzard 164.

4.20 GLENVIEW ANNIVERSARY 4 Y NOVICES HURDLE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 105 212102 DEEP WATER 27 (D.F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. R Dawson 148.

4.50 GUYEV NAPA NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 106 212103 COMEY GUYEV 26 (D.F.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. M J Tizzard 164.

5.20 BARTON & GUESTER HANDICAP HURDLE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses. Includes 107 212104 TOMPOSTO 16 (D.S.) (McD) 2-10-97. G Maitland 148.

FORM FOCUS

Goodies Abbey beat Abbey Lad in 10-runner hunter chase at Stratford (2m, good). Ashwell Boy 1st of 10 in 10-runner novice hunter chase at Stratford (2m, good).

FORM FOCUS

Tempo 41 2nd of 24 in Unusable Power in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, good) with Spurred (10 better off) 4th.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes Ascot, 2.00 (2m 4f) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

Catterick

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 2.30 (2m 4f) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

Folkestone

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 2.10 (2m 4f) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

3.55 LEVY BARDON KNIGHTON MAIDEN AUCTION

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

4.30 LANGHAM MAIDEN STAKES

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

5.00 SIMON DE MONTFORT MAIDEN STAKES

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

LEICESTER

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 2.15 Topaloti, 2.45 Tajasar, 3.20 Cape Hope, 3.55 Bury, 4.30 Dutch Lad, 5.00 Amnesis, 5.30 Dayaband.

2.25 PITMISTRE SELLING HANICAP HURDLE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

2.55 WSM MERCEDES BENZ SPRINTER NOVICES CHASE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

3.30 ORCHARD RESTAURANT MAIDEN HURDLE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

4.05 ORCHARD RESTAURANT MAIDEN HURDLE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

4.40 WSM MERCEDES BENZ ACTROS HANDICAP CHASE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Horses, Odds. Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

Vertical sidebar with various race results and advertisements.

46 SPORT

Christopher Irvine offers his assessment of how the Super League season will unfold

Briti Midl. defi low-c three

BRITISH A UK-based... Improved efficiencies helped...

Clive for s both l

Mul pr ec for mixing solicitors... be a bend c discipline i...

The c in the NOW is t hers of secur the supposed paid to i...

1st: WIGAN WARRIORS. Back at Wembley, back in every sense. With David Whelan's money behind them...

2nd: ST HELENS. Shrewd signings have put welcome depth in the Saints squad. Paul Sculthorpe is a prize capture...

3rd: BRADFORD BULLS. Twenty straight wins gave Bradford the title last year. Their power and size will still take some stopping...

4th: LONDON BRONCOS. The loss to Wigan in the Challenge Cup semi-final exposed London as one-dimensional. Don't be fooled...

5th: SHEFFIELD EAGLES. There are likely to be several claims to the last precious play-off spot, but by reaching Wembley, the unfancied Eagles have shown...

6th: LEEDS RHINOS. Masters of underachievement. Widely-respected new coach in Graham Murray and Leeds are talking a good game...



The dozen Super League captains will all have eyes on the main prize under the new top-five play-off format

Wigan already have grand claims to title

Rugby league resembles a great egg race, always striving to get somewhere by forceful means. Each season brings a crop of innovations...



It is anyone's guess as to who will decide the franchise end of the season and this

is why a reasonable case can be put for any one of half a dozen. The world club championship experiment was not all bad...

applications for the Super League next year. Then there is the divisive issue of Super League Europe (SLE)...



Robinson, the league's finest talent, can lead Wigan to glory

7th: CASTLEFORD TIGERS. From no-hopers less than a year ago to play-off hopefuls is a mark of Stuart Raper's achievement...

8th: SALFORD REDS. With a creative midfield triangle of Josh White, Steve Blakeley and Martin Crompton...

9th: HALIFAX BLUE SOX. Thrum Hall no more. Halifax have migrated to The Shay after 112 years...

10th: WARRINGTON WOLVES. The result of a mass clear-out is that Warrington should at least be more competitive. Van de Velde will not tolerate some of the horror shows of last year...

11th: HULL SHARKS. Might the Sharks find themselves out of their depth? They drowned at Salford in the Challenge Cup...

12th: HUDDERSFIELD. Giants by name, minnows by nature. Garry Schofield is in at the coaching deep end with a squad little altered from last year...

FULL 1998 SUPER LEAGUE FIXTURES

Table of Super League fixtures from Friday April 3 to Friday May 8, listing teams and scores.

Table of Super League fixtures from Sunday June 14 to Saturday August 22, including play-off predictions.

Sh Shaun Edwards: old head at Bradford Bulls. A portrait of Shaun Edwards with a caption.

كندا من الأصل

FOOTBALL

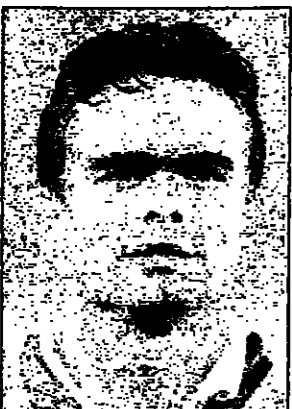
Arsenal fear absence of their flying Dutchman

By Matt Dickinson

THE odds are shortening by the day against two teams from outside the top flight taking to the pitch together for the first time for an FA Cup Final at Wembley. Sheffield United and Wolverhampton Wanderers, of the Nationwide League first division, must be growing increasingly confident that they can rewrite history on May 16.

The problems for their semi-final opponents from the FA Carling Premiership — Newcastle United and Arsenal respectively — are growing.

Arsenal's woes may not be instantly apparent, given that they lie second in the Premiership with two games in hand on Manchester United, the leaders, but the heavy toll of matches is beginning to drain resources and Marc Overmars could be a significant absentee for the match against Wolverhampton Wanderers at Villa Park on Sunday.



Overmars: injury blow

With Dennis Bergkamp already a certain non-starter because of suspension, Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, will not want to be without his other influential Dutchman, but Overmars has only an even money chance of being fit, according to Wenger, because of the ankle injury that forced him to come off at half-time during the 1-0 victory away to Bolton Wanderers on Tuesday.

The former Watford player agreed to move to Molineux on a transfer-deadline day, initially on loan, but with a view to a £400,000 permanent deal. A Wolverhampton spokesman said that the Dutch club would not issue clearance "until they have agreed details of a termination package with the player. Connolly's move is now on hold, and he has returned to Rotterdam."

Hero's redeeming qualities lift Inter

OLIVER HOLT



Ronaldo is hailed as a messiah by club and country. At 21, he has the world at his feet

It is half-time at the San Siro and down in the depths of the stadium, in the VIP room, a small knot of people are ignoring the canapés, the fruit juices and the waiters in white ties and gathering round a calendar that is mounted on a lectern. One picture, in particular, is commanding their attention.

It is an image of Ronaldo, the best football player in the world, standing with his back to the camera. He is perched on a plinth on a mountain, gazing out over Rio de Janeiro, his arms outstretched, his index fingers pointing in opposite directions. He is imitating the statue of Christ the Redeemer.



Ronaldo poses beneath the Pirelli poster that has come to symbolise his standing at Inter

Inter like no other player before him. He is to this club and this league what Michael Jordan is to the Chicago Bulls and the National Basketball Association. He is what they call in the United States the "marquee player". He is bigger than everything.

The club sells about 2,000 Ronaldo shirts every week and in the beautiful Galleria in the city centre, scarves with his name on adorn almost every store. Brazil shirts sell fast, too, and Brazilian flags hang over the balconies at the San Siro. There is not, though, a statue of him outside the stadium, like Jordan's outside the United Center. The likeness to Christ the Redeemer will have to do for now.



Ronaldo is vital to Brazil's hopes of retaining World Cup

'He has come to dominate Inter like no other player before him'

player, and three in the Uefa Cup. He is only 21, too, young enough to inspire hope for even greater things in the future.

In the Uefa Cup semi-final first leg against Spartak Moscow on Tuesday night, everything went through Ronaldo. Everything I have seen him play several times before, both for Barcelona and Brazil. He has never looked particularly impressive, always a little lethargic, but he has always scored. On Tuesday, his brilliance in the first half was exhilarating to watch, the sort of performance it is a privilege to see.

He is an out-and-out striker, so, to some extent, he is dependent on the service he gets. The Inter midfield of Djorkaeff, Winter, Ze Elias and Zanetti feed him the ball at every opportunity and, when he got it, fear gripped the Spartak defence. Passing is not yet part of his lexicon, but so tight is his control, so blinding his speed, that he almost does not need it.

One run, in the tenth minute, was mesmerising. In a flash of sidesteps, feints and eye-cheating turns and changes of pace, he danced his way through the massed ranks of those who sought to deny him. Somehow, the last man managed to touch the ball and deflect it far enough away from Ronaldo that a team-mate could hack it away in panic.

The rest of the half was a series of curling shots, party tricks that majored on the step over the ball that froze his markers for the split second he needed, and a couple of volleys that screamed narrowly wide. He took corners from both sides, with right foot and left foot, and he took free kicks. He looked like the best player in the world.

This time, though, he did not score. Spartak played more like a team than the one that they were facing and, early in the second half, the Russian team equalised Zamorano's fierce header that had put Inter ahead just before the interval. Frustration mounted and it took the arrival of Recoba, a Uruguayan with the sweetest left foot you have ever seen, to swing the match back Inter's way.

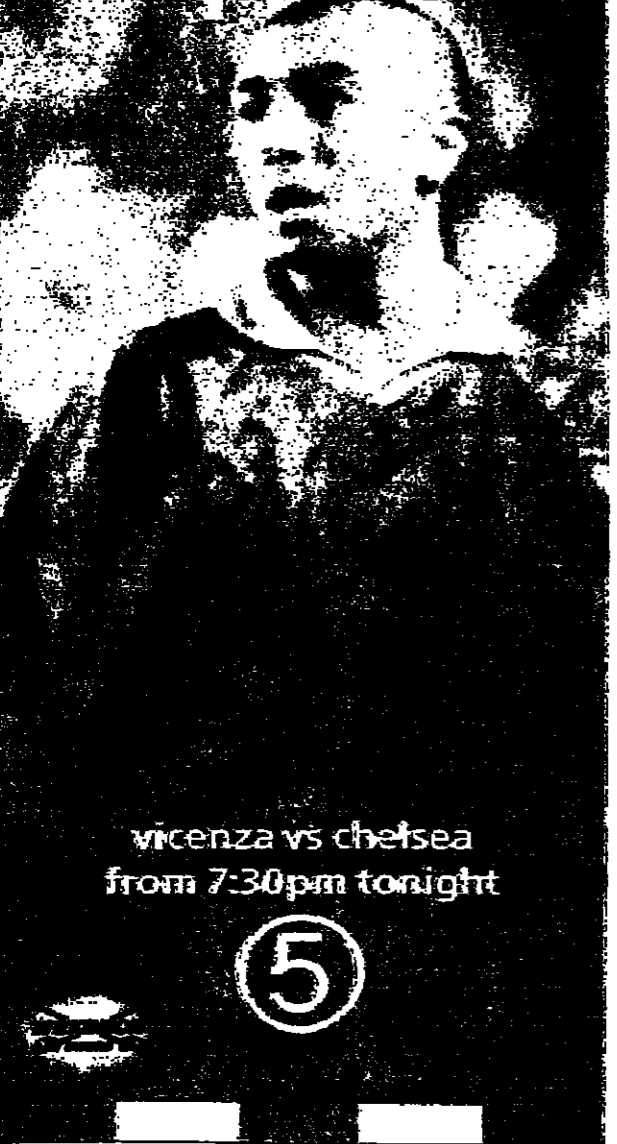
They got their winner in injury time when Ze Elias hooked in a shot from close range after a goalmouth scramble. It had all stemmed from another inswinging corner. Guess who took it?

FOOTBALL

Tuesday's late results

Man Utd	3	1	9	7	60	23	63
Arsenal	3	0	7	4	49	26	60
Liverpool	3	1	4	7	51	34	54
Blackburn	3	1	4	7	51	39	51
Chelsea	3	0	5	3	59	36	48
Sheff Utd	3	1	4	11	15	33	48
Leeds	3	0	4	5	11	44	38
West Ham	3	0	3	8	11	44	40
Dartford	3	0	3	8	11	44	40
Southampton	3	1	3	4	14	41	43
A Villa	3	0	2	6	14	38	42
Luton	3	0	1	10	9	38	42
Sheff Wed	3	1	0	7	14	45	38
Wrexham	3	0	9	12	30	34	36
Newcastle	3	1	9	13	28	36	36
Tottenham	3	1	9	15	32	48	34
Everton	3	1	8	9	14	35	46
Barnley	3	1	9	4	18	32	71
Bolton	3	1	6	12	13	28	40
C Palace	3	1	6	8	17	27	54

England expects...



Shoulder problem puts Flowers' World Cup place in jeopardy

By Richard Hobson

TIM FLOWERS expects to discover today whether a persistent shoulder injury will force him to miss the World Cup finals this summer. The Blackburn Rovers goalkeeper underwent a scan yesterday after attempts to resolve the problem with injections failed. Roy Hodgson, the Blackburn manager, is braced for confirmation that Flowers will require an operation and miss the last eight games of the season.

The situation could hardly have arisen at a worse time. Flowers has worked his way back into the England fold by his consistency for Blackburn and he won his tenth cap against Switzerland last week. Ironically, Ian Walker, one of Flowers' rivals to understudy David Seaman in France, has just returned for Tottenham Hotspur after missing three months himself because of a damaged shoulder.

Flowers' injury occurred against West Ham United seven weeks ago — a scan then revealed "wear and tear" and some arthritis — but he aggravated it again in Switzerland and the pain has intensified to the point where he came off midway through the second half of the 2-1 win against Barnsley in the FA Carling Premiership on Tuesday night.

He said: "The shoulder has never really got better, although it has been passable. I knew going into the Barnsley game that hard shots would knock it back. Usually, it would come back into place after a minute, but this time I fell awkwardly after punching away a cross and could not lift my arm above my head.

"I have had two cortisone injections, which is probably the maximum to have in a certain spot. The specialist will not let me have any more and when he had a look, he said my shoulder is pretty big — and for a keeper, it is like a hamstring." Flowers, 31, would become the second England player after Robbie Fowler to rule himself out of the World Cup finals.

His absence may prove more crucial to Blackburn than England as the competition for Uefa Cup places intensifies. Blackburn have been in the top six all season and the victory against Barnsley took them above Chelsea and Leeds United. Alan Fentis, the Northern Ireland goalkeeper, is likely to see them through the campaign.

Hodgson said: "To lose an England goalkeeper is a massive blow, but we cannot go on nursing him through if it flares up every time. We have got to put it right and, if that means an operation, then so be it."

Georgi Kinkladze's proposed transfer to Ajax has reached deadlock because of the Dutch club's reluctance to pay the £5.5 million fee demanded by Manchester City. The Georgia midfielder player has been in Amsterdam to discuss personal terms after Joe Royle, the City manager, made it plain that he was happy to offload the 24-year-old.

Negotiations are continuing, with City reluctant to drop their price even though they paid just £500,000 when they signed him from Dinamo Tbilisi three years ago.

Stan Collymore, the Aston Villa striker, is likely to be out of action for a further three weeks after having a cortisone injection for his groin problem.

John Gregory, the Villa manager, said that the player, whose World Cup hopes have faded rapidly after he started the campaign in Glenn Hoddle's squad, would probably return for the Premiership clash at home to Bolton Wanderers on April 25.

Gregory said: "The specialist has said that Stan can't do anything for ten days. He might then be able to get in a couple of days' training, which would make April 18 against Southampton the earliest possible date he could return to action. But I would say the following week's game would be more realistic."

Collymore's recent brief appearances have impressed Gregory, during which he has scored twice against Liverpool and once in the Uefa Cup against Atlético Madrid.



Flowers: consistent

Injured Asprilla likely to miss World Cup

FAUSTINO ASPRILLA, the former Newcastle United striker, is thought likely to miss the World Cup finals in France this summer because of injury.

Asprilla, who returned to Parma in a £7 million transfer in January after an unsettled spell in the North East, aggravated a leg muscle injury while playing in a series of warm-up matches for Colombia, who have been drawn in group G along with England, Romania and Tunisia.

"I fear he will not be able to get back to full fitness for the World Cup," Alvaro Fina, the president of the Colombian football federation, said yesterday.

The absence of Asprilla, 28, will also reduce his Italian club's hopes of finishing high enough in Serie A to secure a place in the Uefa Cup next season.

John McGinlay's hopes of a World Cup place are also over after he was ruled out for the remainder of the season with an Achilles tendon problem. The Bradford City striker will have an operation on the injury and will be in plaster for two or three weeks.

McGinlay was only on the fringes of Craig Brown's squad. He has scored just three goals since moving to Bradford from Bolton Wanderers earlier this season.

Geoffrey Richmond, the chairman of the Nationwide League first division club, said: "He's been struggling for the last six or eight weeks. Hopefully, he'll get a good pre-season behind him and next season we'll see the real John McGinlay."

The Scottish Football Association (SFA) has had partial success in obtaining extra tickets for the finals. Just under 1,000 extra places have been given for their group matches against Morocco and Norway.

David Findlay, an SFA spokesman, said: "That means we have around 2,500 tickets for each of those two matches. However, no further tickets have been reserved for the opening match against Brazil and our allocation remains at 5,000."

Members of the Scotland Travel Club should hear by letter by the end of next week if they have been successful in their applications.

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FOR FIRST TIME TELEPHONE CALLERS staking £25 or more using Switch, Delta or Solo bank or building society debit cards.

CALL TODAY 0800 44 40 40

Free bet is a £10 Correct Score bet on tonight's Vicenza v Chelsea match. (Please place your bet and make your free bet selection within the same call.)

WILLIAM HILL

'LIVE' CUP WINNERS' CUP ACTION

6/5 VICENZA 9/4 DRAW CHELSEA 7/4

Correct Score: VICENZA vs CHELSEA

11/2	1-0	6/1
8/1	2-0	11/1
8/1	2-1	10/1
20/1	3-0	23/1
18/1	3-1	23/1
33/1	3-2	33/1
11/2	0-0	11/2
5/1	1-1	5/1
18/1	2-2	18/1

Other scores on request. Odds void if match not completed.

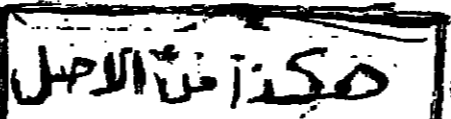
FIRST GOALSCORER

5/1	AMBROSETTI (V)
5/1	-DI MATTEO (V)
11/2	-LUISO (V)
13/2	-VIALLI (C)
13/2	-ZOLA (C)
15/1	-FLO (C)
12/1	-ZANUSSI (V)
14/1	-DI MATTEO (C)
16/1	-LEBOEUF (C)
17/2	-NO GOALSCORER

Other players on request. Odds void if match not completed.

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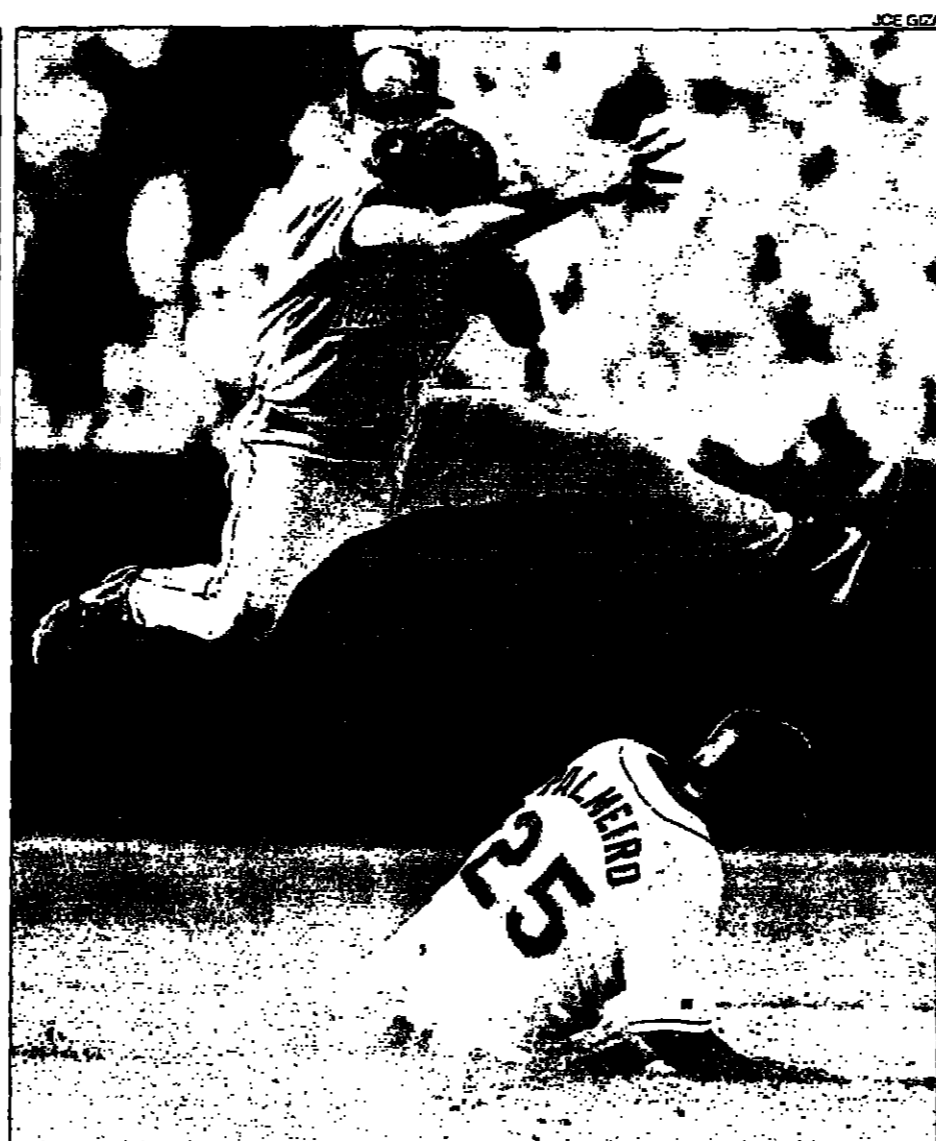


Boxing
Eubank in denial
as new world title
challenge beckons

ONE of the more hurtful moments in the distinguished career of Chris Eubank was when he was reminded by Naseem Hamed, in the featherweight's inimitable way, that he was no longer a world champion. Eubank hopes that he will not hear that kind of unsolicited remark again after April 18, when he challenges Carl Thompson in Manchester for the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) cruiserweight title. "It's not the sort of thing a fighter should say to another fighter who has paid his dues, or to any fighter for that matter. I believe I was a good champion," said the man who will be remembered for his epic battles against Michael Watson and Nigel Benn. Just to be sure that he will not fail for want of effort, Eubank is in virtual isolation in a training camp in Cornwall. For the past month, he has been at the Hustyn's Country Club in a hollow in St Brook Downs, near Bodmin, which can only be reached by a narrow, twisting country lane. Eubank wrung out his T-shirt and said: "There's nothing here but fresh air, hills, bogs, sheep and horse manure. But I have to do it because at home the telephone never stops ringing for business meetings, film premieres and invitations to parties." Eubank's mobile telephone cannot even pick up a signal at the camp. "When I've finished training, I go up to the top of the hill where I can get a signal and pick up all the messages that have been left for me during the day," he said. "I miss my wife and children very much. But I know that abstinence keeps me focused and this is one title I want. The last time I went away from home to train was six years ago, when I was in Manchester for the fight with John Jarvis. I was lethal. I knocked him out in three rounds. I'll beat Thompson even if Manchester is his home town. "I will be the best I can be. When I'm at my best, I can beat anyone in the world, even Roy Jones. Anyone can be beaten. I know, because Steve Collins beat me and I'm a much better fighter than Steve. He had a strategy. He



Thompson, left, and Eubank became acquainted



Felix Martinez, the Kansas City short stop, leaps over Rafael Palmeiro, of Baltimore Orioles, after completing a double play on the opening day of the new season

McGwire proves early hit

THE baseball season began with a bang, or rather, a fusillade across the United States on Tuesday as home-run hitters threw off the cars of winter with a series of hefty blows. Most eyes were on the two newcomers to the Major Leagues, the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, who made their first appearances in, respectively, the National and American Leagues. Both teams lost. Tampa Bay went down 11-6 to what is expected to be a resurgent Detroit Tigers team. Arizona might have hoped to do better than a 9-2 defeat at the hands of the Colorado Rockies, but in baseball there is always tomorrow. Another 161 games stretch across the season ahead. By the time that the last of them is played in September, the country may well be agog at the prospect of seeing the greatest of all baseball records broken. Roger Maris hit 61 homers in 1961, breaking a record set by Babe Ruth and nobody has come closer to surpassing him than Mark McGwire, of the St Louis Cardinals, who hit 58 last season. One of the highlights of last summer was the race between McGwire and Ken Griffey Jr, of the Seattle Mariners, who hit 56, to be the first to match Maris. Both men are off in pursuit again already. Griffey was one of four Mariners to homer in his team's opener against the Cleveland Indians, the American League champions, but it was not enough to stave off defeat, 10-9. McGwire was altogether more successful. His homer, struck off the Los Angeles Dodgers's starting pitcher, Ramon Martinez, was a grand slam and helped to carry the Cardinals to an encouraging 6-0 victory. It was the first time in the exalted history of the Cardinals that someone had hit a grand slam on opening day. His manager, Tony La Russa, was impressed. "McGwire's hit was huge," he said. "If he didn't get it, we may not have scored at all. Martinez was pitching very tough." The Florida Marlins may have spent the off-season offloading the talent that won them the World Series last year, but it made no immediate difference to their fortunes on the field. Their starting line-up included only four of the outfield players who began the decisive final game last October, but the Marlins still overcame the Chicago Cubs 11-6. The World Series' most valuable player, Ivan Hernandez, was the winning pitcher.

TRIATHLON
Lessing aims to
play the
avenger

CHRIS McCORMACK, the Australian who denied Simon Lessing a third successive world championship last year, is to challenge the Briton for his London Triathlon title this season. Another measure of the London event's growing status is that it will serve as qualifying race for the Olympic Games, with points at stake for entry into Sydney 2000, at which triathlon makes its Olympic debut. Lessing won the inaugural London event unchallenged last September, but a repeat of his two-minute victory cannot be expected with McCormack in the field. In Perth, two months after London, McCormack ended the five-year hold on the men's title that Great Britain enjoyed. Lessing had won it in 1992, 1995 and 1996 and Spencer Smith in 1993 and 1994. By the time that London comes around on September 20, Lessing hopes to have the world title back. The world championships take place in Lausanne three weeks before London. London is towards the end of a season in which Lessing's priorities are the Goodwill Games, in New York, the world championships and the France Iron Tour. "So it is too early to start shaking in my boots yet," Lessing, who is based in France, said of his London defence. "London is important to me because it is one of the few opportunities I have to race in the United Kingdom." Though it had teething troubles last year, when a section of the women's field was misrouted, Lessing said: "It is an excellent race. They will have learnt from last year's mistakes and I am sure they are capable of putting on a bigger and better race." A mass participation event along the lines of the London Marathon, organisers are preparing for 3,000 entries. "It is very important for the future of our race that we do not just attract the mass entries, but also the world's best," Michael Smithwick, the event manager, said.

SPORT IN BRIEF
Rusedski entry confirmed

Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman will be part of the usual high-class field for the Stella Artois championship at Queen's Club from June 8-14. Great Britain's leading players will be joined by Patrick Rafter, the US Open champion, Jonas Bjorkman, of Sweden, and Goran Ivanisevic, of Croatia. Mark Philippoussis, of Australia, will defend his title and Pete Sampras has asked for one of five wild-card places to be reserved for him. England were yesterday given a favourable draw for the Uber Cup, the women's world team championship finals, in Hong Kong next month. They have avoided China, the favourites, and are in the same section as Holland, who finished below them in the European qualifying tournament, Indonesia, the holders, and South Korea. Greg Searle, the Great Britain sculler, will be aiming to add the Scullers Head trophy over the Mortlake to Putney course on Saturday to his list of recent successes. Searle, who converted to sculling from rowing in late 1996, dispelled any doubts about his decision by winning at Henley last summer. He took the bronze medal in last September's world championships and won the Thames World Challenge in December. A Belgian surgeon, Jacques Rogge, touted as a possible future International Olympic Committee (IOC) president, has been appointed chairman of the coordination commission for the 2004 Summer Games in Athens. Daniel Wheeler, 16, has become the youngest qualified coach in Great Britain.

FOR THE RECORD

Table with multiple columns containing sports results: Athletics, Baseball, Basketball, Bowling, Golf, Ice Hockey, Ice Skating, Modern Pentathlon, Real Tennis, Rugby Union, Squash, Tennis, Pool Dividends, Snow Reports.

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SPORT

THURSDAY APRIL 2 1998

BRYANT'S EYE 50

Three cheers for the mediocrity of racquetball

Italian connection helps Chelsea

Vialli aware of threat from Vicenza

FROM BRIAN GLANVILLE IN VICENZA

CHELSEA flew out for the first leg of their Cup Winners' Cup semi-final against Vicenza tonight knowing that they must overcome one of the best-drilled teams in Italy if they are to progress.

"I know Vicenza," Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager and one of the club's three high-profile Italians, said. "I know Italian teams are the best in the world about tactics, about organisation, about spirit, about the way they prepare the match."

"Vicenza haven't got any superstars, but they are organised, they work very hard for the team. We hope we can spot some faults and take advantage of them, even if I know it will be very tough and very tight. I know Guidolin [the Vicenza manager]. I know the way he wants his team to play, so I know what we have to face."

The word "organisation" was on many lips. "They're well organised," Roberto di Matteo, who played against Vicenza often during his time with Lazio, said. "They defend well, give little space."

Dennis Wise, too, said that Chelsea faced a "very difficult" task. "They're very disciplined and like to sit back and be patient," Wise, so active in Chelsea's victory over Middlesbrough in the Coca-Cola Cup final on Sunday, said.

The fact that Chelsea had to play for 120 minutes at Wembley will make their job that much harder. "The lads have been very tired in the last couple of days," Wise said, "and it's knocked us out a bit, but we can't make that an excuse. We've got to adapt to these things. We've had enough rest now, and we've got to get back to business."

Gianfranco Zola, who will be especially keen to excel given the stringent competi-



tion for places in attack in Italy's World Cup squad, has been in Bologna, where he has undergone treatment for a groin injury, but Vialli is sure that Zola will be fit for consideration. He is hopeful, too, that Frank Sinclair, the scorer of Chelsea's first goal at Wembley, will have recovered from a stomach injury.

It can be assumed that Vialli, having sat out the Coca-Cola Cup final, will be playing this time, probably alongside Tore Andre Flo, the scorer of those two devastating early goals in Seville against Real Betis in the first leg of their quarter-final.

Modest and midway in the Italian championship, Vicenza



Vialli: pressure

have come to vigorous life in the Cup Winners' Cup. They reached this stage by plundering nine goals against the Dutch side, Roda JC, over two legs.

Their chief striker is Pasquale Luiso, a late developer, who spent eight seasons in inter-regional (non-league) and third division football before finally breaking through last season with Piacenza, for whom he scored one of the most spectacular goals of the season, against Milan, with a scissor kick. Quick and strong, he has been playing up front recently with another latecomer, the 26-year-old Roman, Lamberto Zauli, in his first season in Serie A.

Known as a midfield player, he has been pushed forward to make bullets for Luiso to fire and is wanted by several leading teams, including, it is said, Rangers. However, it is possible that Vicenza will deploy Marcelo Otero, the Uruguayan international striker, who has just recovered from injury.

Another newcomer, Fabio Firmiani, 19, has brought brio to the midfield, where Domenico di Carlo, the 34-year-old playmaker, no longer commands an automatic place. But the long-haired Fabio Viviani is now the dynamo of the midfield, while Francesco Coco, the 21-year-old full back signed from Milan, is a forceful presence on the left.

With the addition of Massimo Ambrosini and Gabriele Ambrosini in midfield, there is a team that can look lively going forward in propitious circumstances, but is perhaps less impressive in defence.

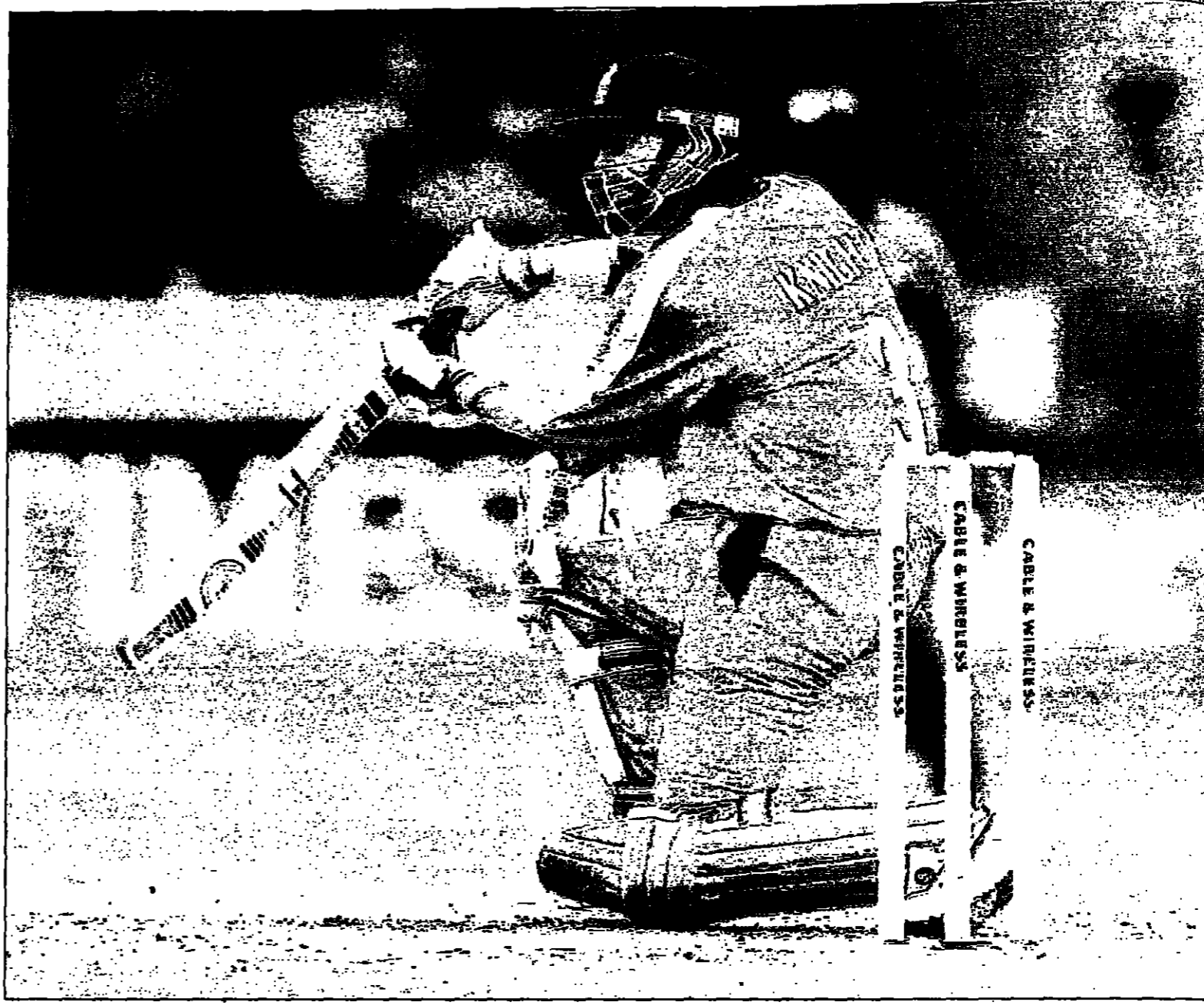
"To beat an Italian team," Vialli, said, "means that Chelsea are ready to do something in Europe. If you want to be the best in Europe, you have to beat an Italian team, so this is a great challenge to us."

"Until you play in England you don't realise how tough it is to play well, because the style is completely different. So you can be the best player in Italy, but you can be the worst player in England."

A manager, however, has an easier time of it in England, Vialli said. "In Italy, the pressure is terrible. In Italy, they don't give you any time. If you lose the first three matches of the season, you're sacked."

Chelsea should not lose tonight and finish the job in London. Vicenza may be an unexceptional one, whose attack will flourish only when it gets the kind of space it did from Roda.

VICENZA (possible 4-4-2) - G. Mandoz, D. Sisti, G. Di Carlo, F. Coco, F. Viviani, F. Firmiani, M. Ambrosini, G. Ambrosini, L. Zauli, P. Luiso. CHELSEA (possible 4-4-2) - E. de Gooijer, F. Sinclair, F. Lobb, M. Duggan, G. Le Sueur, D. Pates, D. Wise, E. Newton, R. di Matteo - G. Vialli, T. A. Flo



Knight plays a shot to the off side during his masterful 90 yesterday that set England on their way to a competitive total against West Indies

Brilliant Knight sets shining example

FROM ALAN LEE CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS

ENGLAND'S heady sequence of one-day victories was under severe threat here yesterday, when they were put into bat on a damp and unpredictable pitch at Kensington Oval. However, West Indies found their progress towards leveling this five-match series at 1-1 frustrated by another masterful innings from Nick Knight and a burst of aggression from the England tail.

Knight, whose England career was stalled by a broken finger in New Zealand early last year, has taken only two games to demonstrate that he is indispensable—in the short game, at least. After his brilliant 122 on Sunday, he made 90 in quite different circumstances yesterday.

An England innings that might conceivably have been snuffed out for fewer than 150 was, thereby, given a precious life extension and, as the pitch dried under late morning sunshine, England prospered.

Their last four wickets added 96 in the final ten overs, a robust 45 from Ealham abrasively supported by Brown and Fleming. A total of 266 was competitive and it owed almost everything to Knight. Had Knight managed the extra ten runs, a welter of statistical tributes awaited him. It would have been the second occasion that he had made consecutive one-day centuries and his fourth hundred would have come in just 18

games. The only players to have made more than four for England — Graham Gooch and David Gower — each played more than 100 internationals and, to sharpen the contest, Allan Border scored only three one-day centuries in 273 games.

Knight was one of nine England players yesterday with no more than 20 one-day caps, a stark contrast in experience with a West Indies side of whom five had stacked up at least 125 appearances. England's comparative rawness was accentuated by the enforced absence of Thorpe and Atherton.

Thorpe, whose back has been troubling him since the Test match on this ground three weeks ago, flew home on Tuesday night for rest and treatment. Atherton's chances

of replacing him were dashed by a stomach bug.

Tuesday had been an unseasonably wet day on the island and further drizzle yesterday morning kept the covers on until shortly before the start. The result was that the same pitch used on Sunday now behaved as an entirely alien surface.

With the outfield also starting conspicuously slow, this was a significant toss to win and Lara released his heavy artillery immediately. Ambrose and Walsh were formidable, obtaining lift and movement at will, and the England openers could not think beyond survival.

Stewart eventually lost patience and sliced Walsh to cover. England were 21 for one in the tenth over, not a propitious moment for Ben

Holloake to begin his second England innings, but his native insouciance rose above it.

In the next six overs, England added 50. The majority came from Knight, driving and pulling voraciously, but Holloake contributed nobly, running confident singles when he did no more than drop the ball at his feet, then wistfully on-driving Rose for two fours in an over.

A checked drive brought his end and England now faltered, Hick going limply back to a leg-break from Lewis that ran down his bat and bowled him through his legs. Further retrenchment was required and Ramprakash was the man for it, accelerating through a 59-run stand that restored equilibrium.

Even after losing Ramprakash to a flat sweep against

Lewis, Knight retained such command that it was a surprise to see him play around a slower ball from Simmons and depart leg-before. His 90 had come from only 107 balls, admirably fast on such a pitch, but England remained vulnerable and Adam Holloake's unlucky run-out, when Walsh deflected an Ealham drive into the non-striker's stumps, left them 158 for six.

Yet again, however, the depth and tenacity of this batting order transformed an awkward situation. Ealham set the tone with a stream of audacious shots in his 37-ball 45. Brown shared 48 in eight overs, but the final onslaught brought 60 from five, leaving West Indies contemplating something else entirely from the routine win that early events had suggested.

BRIDGETOWN SCOREBOARD

Table with cricket scores for England vs West Indies, including batsmen and bowlers.

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

- ACROSS: 1 Insect, arachnid, etc (9), 6 Droop (3), 8 Burnt-sugar sweet (7), 9 Unimportant, petty (5), 10 Elderly (4), 11 Boisterous mirth (8), 13 Taken, held (6), 14 To dress (6), 17 Of the land, its working (8), 18 Damage from use, be dressed in (4), 20 Solids at bottom of glass (5), 21 Charge (high official) (7), 22 Parties: an operating system (3), 23 Repulsive (9). DOWN: 1 Old, disused (7), 2 Most (of); rugby players (5-8), 3 Inclined plane; swindle (4), 4 Hip structure (6), 5 Lord Beaconsfield (8), 6 Stinging rebuff (4,2,3,4), 7 Rain channel; fielder (5), 12 Personal magnetism (8), 15 Range of hearing (7), 16 Disappear (6), 17 Performed sum (5), 19 Incentive; branch line (4).

England suffer as Fifa race heats up

FROM OLIVER HOLT FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT IN TURIN

ENGLAND'S campaign to stage the 2006 World Cup finals appears to have become a victim of the bitter struggle between Lennart Johansson and Sepp Blatter to succeed Joao Havelange as president of Fifa, football's governing body. Blatter, the Fifa general secretary, who has the backing of Michel Platini, has said already that it would be "logical" for the 2006 tournament to be awarded to an African nation in order to cement the growth of football on that continent.

Then, last night, speaking at the Stadio Delle Alpi here before the European Cup semi-final first leg between Juventus and AS Monaco, Johansson, the Uefa president, confirmed that he would not renege on an agreement he was party to, which threw Europe's support behind Germany for the 2006 finals. Thus, both candidates for the highly influential position seem untouched by England's campaigning.

Johansson has already been named as a "German puppet" by Blatter and his camp. Although he fiercely denied that accusation last night, Johansson sat behind a table

flanked by Egidius Braun, the German FA president and one of his key supporters, and insisted he would not change his stance on 2006. "I am not a puppet on a string for anyone," Johansson said. "I go my own way. Germany, Italy and England are all important countries when it comes to forming the future of world football and I was the first one who fought for English clubs to be put back in business in European competition after their ban. "I admire Germany for their loyalty and their extremely good organisation and that is about all. Anybody is allowed to be a candidate for



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Advertisement for a book titled 'The complete guide to the Grand National'.

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page.